

NEW WORLD



“the international Magna Carta”

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights sixty years on



Bush and multilateralism

page 6



Human rights heroes

page 13



Action on Darfur

page 31



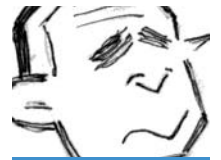
UNA-UK

PLUS The responsibility to protect – and prosecute? [page 8](#) Updates on Burma, Sudan, Sri Lanka and education [page 9](#) Rights of indigenous people [page 16](#) Mike Wood leaves UNA-UK [page 24](#) Model UN, Ghana-style [page 32](#)



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Letter from the Editor

In 2008 the Universal Declaration of Human Rights turns 60. This issue of New World kicks off UNA-UK's commemoration of this important anniversary by taking stock of the legacy of the declaration, which one of its drafters, Eleanor Roosevelt, called "the international Magna Carta for all men everywhere".

And there is another anniversary to celebrate: it has been three years since New World was revamped. During this period we have sought to professionalise the look of the magazine and raise the quality of its content in order to make it an incisive publication with appeal to our members, our partners and untapped audiences. This issue builds on these improvements and introduces a sleeker, more modern format with some exciting new features.

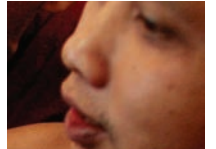
One highlight is the introduction of opinion pieces from some of the world's leading UN analysts. To start us off, Jeffrey Laurenti gives cause for hope that the US may be re-embracing the internationalism of Harry Truman and Franklin Roosevelt. Thomas Schindlmayr tells us what the new UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities will mean in practice. And Ramesh Thakur argues that the responsibility to protect needs to be complemented by a 'responsibility to prosecute'.

Veronica Lie, Editor

| | |
|--|----|
| DIRECTORY | 4 |
| Meet the Interns | 4 |
| UN MISCELLANY | 5 |
| DISPATCHES | |
| George W. Bush, Father of the New Internationalism? | 6 |
| Jeffrey Laurenti | |
| Time to Change Hearts, Minds and Laws on Disability | 7 |
| Thomas Schindlmayr | |
| The Responsibility to Protect – and Prosecute? | 8 |
| Ramesh Thakur | |
| UPDATES | |
| Burma | 9 |
| Sudan | 9 |
| Sri Lanka | 10 |
| Education | 10 |
| ESSAY | |
| Sixty Years of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights | 11 |
| Stefanie Grant | |
| FEATURE | |
| Human Rights Champions Over Six Decades | 13 |
| BRIEFING | |
| The Rights of Indigenous Peoples | 16 |
| Natalie Samarasinghe | |
| PARLIAMENT | 18 |
| RESOURCES | |
| Books | 19 |
| UN Online | 19 |
| LETTERS | 20 |
| TRIBUTE | |
| Arthur Ross | 21 |
| UNA-UK | |
| The Membership at Work | 22 |
| Mike Wood | 24 |
| Listings | 25 |
| Noticeboard | 28 |
| Annual Conference 2008 | 29 |
| YPN | |
| Working for Peace | 30 |
| Action on Darfur | 31 |
| UNYSA | |
| Model UN, Ghana-style | 32 |
| Freshers Fairs | 34 |

Is Bush ushering in a new wave of international cooperation? Who would think it?

p.6



A return to business as usual? UN envoy returns from Burma as international community fails to adopt hard-hitting measures.

p.9



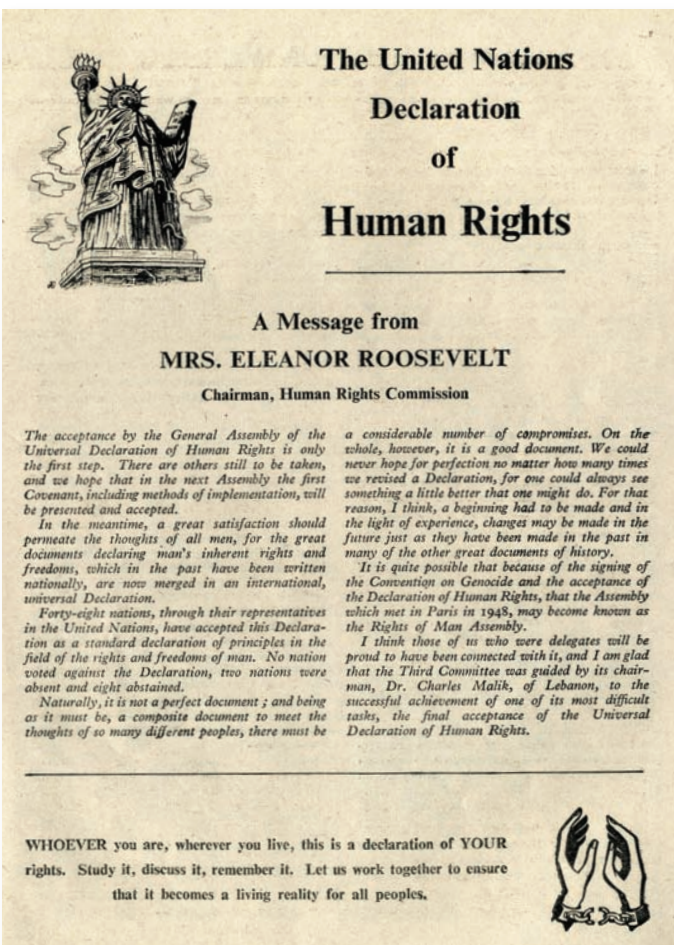
Who is your human rights hero? We name ten human rights champions. Why not tell us who we've missed out?

p.13



Annual Conference 2008
Debate the issues, and help shape UNA-UK policy at Exeter University next March.

p.29



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Meet the interns . . .



NICK BRANSON

I recently joined the UNA-UK team as a membership and fundraising intern. I answer members' enquiries, update the membership database, and assist with Flag Day events.

In addition to this, I will be overseeing the registration of delegates for UNA-UK Annual Conference 2008. The up-

coming Annual Conference is being held at Exeter University, and I hope that being an alumnus will put me in good stead to help with questions about the venue.

At Exeter I read history and French and I am now studying towards a Masters in International Studies and Diplomacy at the School of Oriental and African Studies, London. I have also studied at the London School of Economics, in France and in China.

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CYNTHIA PARK

My communications internship with UNA-UK started in July, when I was brought on to help with continuing structural improvements to the UNA-UK website while Matt Ripley was doing an internship with the UNODC in Vienna. I also compile Membership Matters, among other things!

Though my background is in science, I have always taken an active interest in world affairs. Working at UNA-UK seemed like an excellent way to learn more about the UN and international relations more broadly, while putting my web skills to use.

My previous experience of marketing and websites stems from working for bands and record labels during my undergraduate days. I graduated in 2006 with a degree in physics. My dissertation was on quantum cryptography and I did extended lab work on the Zeeman effect and the mass of galaxy M31. I have just begun studying towards an MSc in Science and Security at King's College London.

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ISELIN VALE

I started my internship at UNA-UK in September and have been writing news stories for the website, helping to improve the Association's media outreach, and uploading new content to the website.

I decided to do a communications internship at UNA-UK because it seemed a perfect means of combining my two fields of interest and expertise: journalism and international relations. I have a BA from Bournemouth University in Multimedia Journalism, and an MA from King's College London in International Relations.

Originally from Norway, I have spent four of the last five years in the UK. The other year I spent in Russia, working in Moscow as a television journalist for an English language news channel. I also lived in Switzerland for six years, and thus speak fluent Swiss German.

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ideally be 300 dpi resolution

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UN and EU mission to protect civilians in Chad and CAR

On 25 September, the Security Council agreed resolution 1778, authorising the establishment of the UN Mission in the Central African Republic and Chad (MINURCAT), along with an EU military operation to provide security support. The aim of the mission is to provide security for the villagers and refugees who live near the Darfur border and so are under threat from cross-border incursions by fighters from Sudan.

The UN contingent will consist of around 300 police and 50 military liaison officers along with some civilian personnel. The EU force of 3,000 mainly French troops is authorised under Chapter VII of the UN Charter to use “all necessary measures” to protect civilians in danger, guarantee humanitarian access, and ensure the freedom of movement and safety of UN personnel.

MINURCAT, to be based in the Chadian capital of N’Djamena, will work closely with the governments of Chad and the Central African Republic to promote human rights and the rule of law, and put an end to the use of child soldiers.

UN responds to request to step up its engagement in Iraq

On 10 August the Security Council unanimously agreed to renew for a year the mandate of the UN Assistance Mission in Iraq (UNAMI), while also giving it a wider political role.

Under resolution 1770, UNAMI will now advise and support the Iraqi government in promoting human rights; national reconciliation; regional dialogue on issues such as border security, energy and refugees; and judicial and legal reform. The mission will be led by the newly appointed Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Iraq, Staffan de Mistura, who succeeded Ashraf Jehangir Qazi, now the senior UN envoy to Sudan.

Resolution 1770 was passed almost exactly four years after 22 UN staff members were killed by a suicide bomb attack on UN headquarters in Baghdad. The wider mandate the resolution confers entails only a small increase in international staff – from 65 to 95 – but the UN Staff Union is opposed to the expansion. At a memorial to those who died in the Baghdad blast, Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon told employees, “Your safety is and always will be a paramount concern.”

Taiwan turned down – again

In September, Taiwan’s bid for UN membership was rejected for the 15th consecutive year, after the committee setting the agenda for the annual General Assembly session decided not to recommend the item for discussion.

A UN spokesperson said that the rejection was based on General Assembly resolution 2758 of 1971, which recognises the People’s Republic of China as the only legitimate representative of China to the UN.

For the first time, the application was lodged under the name of Taiwan rather than the Republic of China. The President of Taiwan, Chen Shui-bian, has announced plans for a referendum in March to gauge public support for a UN seat for the island. Both the US and China oppose the planned vote.

Just 24 countries officially recognise Taiwan, which China views as a break-away province.

UN Human Rights Council gets ready for peer review

The Human Rights Council has published the timetable for its Universal Periodic Review, a new mechanism under which the human rights records of all UN member states will be scrutinised, starting with Council members. The schedule was decided by choosing states from each regional group by lot, and then arranging these alphabetically,

with the exception of those who volunteered to be reviewed and those whose term on the Council was due to expire soon. The UK is among the first to be reviewed.

Meanwhile, the US remains critical of the Human Rights Council since voting against its establishment in March 2006. In early September, the US Senate passed a foreign appropriations bill for 2008 with an amendment stating that none of the US contributions to the UN should be made available to the Council. The legislation was introduced by Republican Senator Norm Coleman who argues that the body has persisted in focusing disproportionately on Israel while neglecting serious violations elsewhere.

The move is largely symbolic. As the Human Rights Council is funded through the UN’s regular budget, Congress cannot actually target the Council for budget cuts: it can only hold back an amount equivalent to the US’s portion of the body’s budget.

Secretary-General convenes high-level event on climate change

On 24 September, Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon convened a one-day conference on climate change, a cause he has made a centre-piece of his leadership of the UN. Over 150 states were represented at the meeting, 80 of them by heads of state; the event has been touted as the largest-ever gathering of world leaders on this issue.

The summit, held on the eve of the General Assembly’s annual high-level segment, aimed to build political momentum towards a key meeting in Bali in December, when mapping out a successor regime to Kyoto will be on the agenda. According to the UN, a ‘son of Kyoto’ agreement needs to be in place by 2009 in order to secure national ratifications in time for 2012, when the emissions targets contained in the Kyoto Protocol expire.

The Bali meeting will also address strategies for helping the most vulnerable countries – the poorest states and the small island developing states – to adapt to the effects of climate change, including through the deployment of clean technologies. Delegates will also discuss the role of carbon markets in incentivising a shift to lower carbon practices and ways of financing effective responses to climate change.

Dispatches



George W Bush, Father of the New Internationalism?



Jeffrey
Laurenti

Is the Bush administration ushering in a new wave of multilateralism? Who woulda thunk it?

Yet the evidence is accumulating that the American public, the Washington policy elites more reluctantly, and the Bush administration itself – most reluctantly of all – are rediscovering the indispensability of the global frameworks pioneered by Franklin Roosevelt and Harry Truman.

President Bush, of course, had famously consigned the United Nations to irrelevance when its members refused to authorise his war against Iraq. He adamantly barred the United Nations from leading Iraq's reconstruction after the triumph of American arms.

Yet in August the United States asked the Security Council to approve a major new UN presence in Baghdad to help untie Iraq's political knots and pull the country back from the abyss.

The President had much earlier come around to embrace the United Nations'

unique responsibility for dealing with Darfur. Most conservatives scoff at any responsibility to protect African populations, but advocacy groups' persistent clamour for action finally made the atrocities in Sudan impossible politically to ignore – hence, the United Nations.

Impatient to 'solve' Iraq in 2003 – a country whose population was, if nothing else, secure from rampant killing at the time – the administration scorned the arduous process of building support for military action among UN member countries. But it found that this same time-consuming process made perfect sense in Sudan, despite daily raids and massacres.

Darfur also occasioned the President's first retreat from his fierce campaign to abort the newly established International Criminal Court (ICC). With his consent, the Security Council in 2005 authorised the court to take action against perpetrators of the killings in western Sudan.

Having earlier made common cause with hard-right congressional allies such as Jesse Helms to 'slay this monster' by mandating cut-offs of aid to countries that ratified the ICC statute without promising to exempt American officials from its reach, Bush then waived the ban in 2006. Even the Republican Congress itself quietly eliminated its bar to military aid to such countries: the conservative crusade against the ICC was ousting the Pentagon from countries where it needed a presence.

The Bush team had swept aside the offer of the NATO alliance to join in collective self-defence to oust Al Qaeda and the

Taliban from Afghanistan, convinced that a multilateral operation would crimp the US military's freedom of manoeuvre. Now it anxiously wants NATO allies' forces to cope with a renewed Taliban insurgency. Washington kept the United Nations to a near-invisible 'light footprint' in Afghanistan's reconstruction, preferring to divide up reconstruction responsibilities

among a handful of Western powers that no one could coordinate – a triumph of national-sovereigntist ideology over common-sense multilateralism that even administration officials now acknowledge has contributed to the Afghan relapse.

To the consternation of conservative hardliners, Bush has called for ratification of the Convention on the Law of the Sea, long a *bête noire* of the right. Even their stalwart allies in the oil industry are deserting them, fearful of being cut out of oil exploration in contested waters. Pricked by

'Americans increasingly welcome international restraints on Washington's war hawks'

Russia's expansive claims in the Arctic, the Senate appears on track to approve ratification as early as this winter.

Last month the Congress stunned UN officials by budgeting \$300 million more to pay for the American share of UN peace-keeping this coming year than the (deliberately low-balled) amount the President had requested.

And the same administration that had ignored the restrictions of the international conventions against torture and on war captives as 'obsolete' obeyed the ruling of the International Court of Justice against executions of foreign nationals tried and convicted of capital offences without notice to their governments. President Bush himself declared that "the United States will discharge its international obligations under the decision of the International Court of Justice... by having state courts give effect to the decision".

This does not mean that the President has experienced an epiphany for internationalism; the change in the administration's direction almost surely reflects compulsion rather than conviction. Washington conservatives have lost none of their zest for denouncing a UN 'permission slip' for attacking other countries, which so spooked



Democratic strategists during the 2004 election campaign. But polling data suggest that Americans increasingly welcome international restraints on Washington's war hawks, blaming Bush bellicosity for the dramatic plunge in America's global standing – and Bush unilateralism for the costly war in Iraq.

In a recent in-depth survey, respondents by a 63-to-32 per cent margin told the American Security Project that they want America to "cooperate with other countries [and] compromise" rather than "put

American interests first at all times, even ...acting alone". By a 66-to-28 per cent margin, they rejected conservatives' muscular doctrine of military preemption. By a 54-to-37 percent margin, they affirmed the United Nations as important for security rather than ineffective or corrupt; and, by a similar margin, they opposed intervention against hostile regimes in other countries.

The belated emergence of Republican realists in the waning years of the Bush administration is itself a signal of Americans' tidal shift toward multilateralism. But the

public appears to be far outpacing the Washington debate in rejecting conservative fantasies of hard-power dominance. Presumably the next administration will more enthusiastically advance the public's new internationalism.

Jeffrey Laurenti is a senior fellow at The Century Foundation and the director of its foreign policy programmes. Previously policy director at UNA-USA, he now sits on its Board of Directors.

Time to change hearts, minds and laws on disability



Thomas Schindlmayr

More than once I have been asked to leave establishments because my presence would 'lower the tone'. On trains, there have been times when I have had to ride in freight cars among mail bags, bicycles, and farm animals. I have been refused entrance to restaurants and nightclubs for 'security' reasons, or I have been admitted only on nights when nobody else was there.

The reason is that I am in a wheelchair and have been ever since I was in a car

'The new Convention ensures that persons with disabilities enjoy the same rights as everyone else'

accident over 30 years ago when I was four years old. In many ways and in some places, times and attitudes are changing, and I am no longer looked upon as the pariah I once was. Legal rights that prohibit discriminatory practices and behaviour against persons with disabilities have already gone a long way in some countries. But why should this only be limited

to some places? We now have a human rights treaty that can make a substantial difference.

My experiences are nothing compared to many of the other 650 million persons with disabilities in the world who are often shunned by their families and ostracised by society. Most have no means of obtaining an education, with little chance of getting a job, living independent lives and fully participating in society. With few opportunities to be self-sufficient they are left to live at the margins, hidden away and forgotten.

Persons with disabilities are still widely viewed as troublesome at best, a burden at worst. Negative attitudes remain the largest obstacle towards the acceptance of persons with disabilities into society, along with a lack of opportunities, societal barriers and inadequate legal protection. The fact is that in over two thirds of countries there is still no anti-discrimination legislation.

It takes time for attitudes towards persons with disabilities to change. But it is a process that can be vastly accelerated by a change in the legal framework; and, now, the countries of the world have unanimously agreed on a legally binding treaty. The new United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities was adopted by the General Assembly in December 2006 after three years of negotiations involving the disability community, governments and international organisations. In March, 80 countries demonstrated their commitment by signing the Convention on the day it opened for signature.

The new Convention ensures that persons with disabilities enjoy the same rights as everyone else. It offers a minimal standard that the international community has agreed upon and, for some, real human rights for the first time. The Convention covers a number of areas where persons with disabilities have not enjoyed their human rights, such as education, employ-

ment, health, political participation, access to justice, accessibility and mobility in society. In practice, this would result in such things as making electoral booths accessible, anti-discrimination practices in the workplace, and children with disabilities attending mainstream schools.

Already, the Convention is making its mark. For instance, Jamaica has drafted a National Disability Act and Panama has incorporated the Convention into its legislation. Disability activists from Spain to India and Nigeria have called on their governments to ratify and implement the treaty. There is a growing recognition of the need for change.

One hundred and seventeen countries have signed the Convention and so far seven countries have ratified it. Thirteen more are needed for the Convention to enter into force. As parliamentarians everywhere consider whether to enact the treaty, they should recognise that, for too long, individuals with disabilities have been treated as lesser people. Far from implementing policies that cater for all people in society, many have discriminated against persons with disabilities. Often decisions have been made on our behalf, and not necessarily in our best interests.

The Convention is long overdue but it is never too late to enact measures that will ensure that the world's largest minority enjoys its human rights. It may take time to realise, but everyone benefits when all people, including persons with disabilities, are given the same opportunities as everyone else. It is now up to countries to ratify and implement the Convention to ensure that persons with disabilities no longer face the practices and behaviour that I and others have endured.

Thomas Schindlmayr works for the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs on disability issues.

The responsibility to protect – and prosecute?



Ramesh Thakur

In an echo of the famous lines from 'The Second Coming' by William Butler Yeats, the UN-centred multilateral system of global governance is in danger of falling apart. In that case, the problem of international anarchy will intensify. Yet in part the system is starting to unravel because of the spread of anarchy within the sovereign jurisdiction of member states, some of which have abused sovereignty as a licence to kill with impunity. Some others lack the essential attributes of sovereignty that would enable them to protect the lives and safety of their citizens against a range of armed predatory groups.

Revulsion at the murder of large numbers of civilians in a range of atrocity

'The need to help and protect civilians at risk of death and displacement from armed conflict is now paramount'

crimes – the drowning of the ceremony of innocence – has led to a softening of public and governmental support for the norms and institutions that shield the perpetrators of atrocity crimes from international criminal accountability. The failure to act can indeed be interpreted as the best lacking the courage of their conviction while the worst engage in mass murder with passionate intensity. 'Mobilising political will' is a more prosaic way of saying that the best need to rediscover and act on their convictions. Darfur is the current poster child for callous international indifference.

The Second World War gave birth to the UN Charter and the Nuremberg Charter. The first was forward-looking,

aiming to ensure peace and security, economic cooperation and respect for human rights. The second was backward-looking, aiming to punish those who started the war and committed horrific crimes against humanity. Nuremberg and Tokyo were instances of victors' justice. Yet by historical standards both tribunals were remarkable for giving defeated leaders the opportunity to defend their actions in a court of law instead of being dispatched for summary execution.

The Genocide Convention, adopted by the General Assembly on 9 December 1948 – one day before the Universal Declaration of Human Rights – was a milestone in defining genocide as a crime against humanity and was thus a mater of universal criminal jurisdiction. The crime of genocide was included in the statutes of the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda, the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia, and the International Criminal Court (ICC).

Two of the most significant normative advances since 1945-1948 have been the establishment of the ICC in 1998 and the UN's adoption of the 'responsibility to protect' norm in 2005. Discussions of the protection of civilians and the prosecution of perpetrators have hitherto proceeded along separate lines. In fact they are two sides of the same coin.

The backdrop to both is the profound changes in the world since 1945, including in the changing nature of armed conflict that has put civilians on the frontline of conflict-related casualties; the rise of a powerful human rights movement and the parallel growth of international humanitarian law, leading to the emergence of a humanitarian community dedicated to championing the cause of civilian protection; the emergence of a robust civil society that is transnational rather than sovereignty-bound; and globalisation, which (1) has shrunk distances, and brought images of human suffering into our living rooms and onto our breakfast tables in graphic detail and real time, while simultaneously expanding our capacity to respond meaningfully, thereby increasing calls to do so; and (2) made total state control of border crossings by people, goods, finance, information, disease, drugs and so on physically impossible, thereby severely curtailing the exercise of sovereignty in practice.

Against this background of the changed world since 1945, the need to help and protect civilians at risk of death and dis-

placement from armed conflict is now paramount. Diplomats, international organisations and NGOs alike will be judged on how well they discharge or dishonour their international responsibility to protect.

The way to apprehend and punish the perpetrators of conscience-shocking crimes on a mass scale is through an international legal framework that establishes the notion of 'universal jurisdiction', where jurisdiction depends not on the place where crimes are committed but on the nature of the crime itself. The fates of Augusto Pinochet (Chile), Slobodan Milosevic (Serbia) and Charles Taylor (Liberia) are but some of several dramatic twists and turns in the last few years in the search for universal justice.

An international criminal court with universal jurisdiction has been the missing link in the system of international criminal justice. The ICC will enable an escape from the tyranny of the episodic of the ad hoc tribunals in Rwanda and the former Yugoslavia, and should be an efficient and cost-effective alternative with respect to time, money and energy.

The ICC's jurisdiction is activated only when states are unwilling or unable to investigate or prosecute. Similarly, the responsibility to protect requires states first to protect their populations, and triggers international intervention only after governments have proved unable or unwilling to do so, or complicit themselves in the crimes being perpetrated.

Both agendas require substantial derogations of sovereignty, the first with respect to the norm of non-intervention and the second with respect to sovereign impunity up to the level of heads of state. Both also require sensitive judgment calls: the use of external military force to protect civilians inside sovereign jurisdiction must first satisfy legitimacy criteria rooted in just war theory, while the prosecution of alleged atrocity criminals must be balanced against the consequences for the prospects and process of peace, the need for post-conflict reconciliation and the fragility of international as well as domestic institutions.

Ramesh Thakur is a Distinguished Fellow at the Centre for International Governance Innovation in Waterloo, Canada. He was formerly Senior Vice-Rector at the UN University and a commissioner on the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty, which produced the seminal 2001 report 'The Responsibility to Protect'.

Burma A Return to Business as Usual?

UN envoy returns from trip as international community fails to adopt hard-hitting measures



Photo © iStockPhoto

At the end of September, UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon dispatched special envoy Ibrahim Gambari to Burma in response to the military junta's violent repression of the peaceful demonstrations which began in mid-August. During his four-day visit Mr Gambari met with both General Than

Shwe, the head of the country's military junta, and Aung San Suu Kyi, the pro-democracy opposition leader who has been under house arrest for almost 12 of the past 18 years.

The Burmese authorities claim that 10 demonstrators were killed but diplomats and activists fear that this figure could be several times higher. There have also been reports of beatings, arbitrary arrests, mass relocations and night-time raids.

Upon his return to the UN Mr Gambari briefed the Secretary-General and the Security Council about his visit to the country. In his briefing to the Council, Mr Gambari explained that, while the protests had been sparked by socio-economic hardship, there was also an important political factor driving the discontent. He said, "What is clear is that since 1988 the democratic aspirations of the people of Myanmar have been systematically denied by the government in the name of stability and security." He warned that, unless the government took steps to increase

transparency and public participation, demands were likely to continue for "an acceleration of the transition to democracy and civilian rule".

There is disagreement among the veto-wielding members of the Security Council over what action to take in relation to Burma, and indeed over whether the Council should act at all. China and Russia, who blocked a US-sponsored draft resolution on Burma in January, argue that the abuses alleged to have occurred in the country do not threaten international peace and security, and so do not fall within the remit of the Council.

According to a statement by the Secretary-General, the Burmese authorities have assured Mr Gambari of a follow-up visit, some time in November. At the time of going to press, General Than Shwe had reportedly agreed to talks with Ms Suu Kyi, provided she met certain conditions, including relinquishing her call for international sanctions against Burma.

Sudan A Mixed Bag

Progress on Darfur must not be held up by recent violence



Photo © iStockPhoto

On 29 September, 10 African Union peacekeepers in Darfur were killed in an attack on their base in Haskanita, a town in southern Darfur. In early October, Haskanita, controlled by the government, was burned to the ground. It is unclear who carried out the incidents, but a splinter faction of the SLA rebel group has been named as a possible perpetrator of the raid on the AU troops.

The incidents occurred at a sensitive time: peace talks between the Sudanese government and rebel groups are scheduled to take place in Libya in late October, under the joint auspices of the UN and AU. In early August, rebel groups met to prepare for these talks, but leaders of some of the key factions have since threatened to boycott the negotiations.

These potential setbacks come as preparations are underway for deploy-

ing the much-awaited UN-AU peacekeeping operation to Darfur, approved in a unanimous Security Council vote on 31 July. The force, to be known as UNAMID, will at full strength comprise around 20,000 troops and 6,000 police. To deploy next year, UNAMID is expected to be the largest, and most expensive, UN peacekeeping operation in history.

The Security Council met on 25 September to discuss troop contributions to UNAMID. It was agreed that the force – which will absorb the existing AU mission – will consist of predominantly African troops, though non-African states will provide some specialist units and logistics equipment. China, which has been perceived as being too conciliatory towards Khartoum, has agreed to supply an engineering contingent.

Sri Lanka Failing Grades

Calls grow for a UN human rights monitoring mission to Sri Lanka



Photo © iStockPhoto

Sri Lanka came under criticism at the sixth session of the UN Human Rights Council, with Portugal, which holds the EU Presidency, calling for the dispatch of a UN human rights monitoring mission to the country. National institutions set up to monitor human rights are widely seen to have failed, and many have put this down to a lack of cooperation from both the government and its rival, the militant group the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE).

The EU statement echoes the recommendations of a September 2007 Human Rights Watch report which criticises the government for “serious back-sliding” with respect to human rights, and for showing itself “unable or unwilling to stem the tide of ongoing human rights violations by state forces”. The report implicates government forces in enforced disappear-

ances, the forcible return of displaced persons to insecure areas, the restriction of press freedoms and extrajudicial killings.

The LTTE continues also to be linked to serious human rights violations, including the targeting of civilians, political assassinations and the recruitment of child soldiers.

Sri Lanka’s representative on the Human Rights Council responded to the EU’s criticism by stating that “the government cared no less for the population than those who expressed the criticism” and that “the citizens of Sri Lanka had always been cared for”.

The UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, the UN Special Rapporteur on Torture and the Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General on Internally Displaced Persons are all due to visit Sri Lanka this year.

Education More Wins for UNA-UK

UNA-UK defends UN’s position in the national curriculum



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ship. Following lobbying by UNA-UK and its partners, the proposal was dropped. All students thus continue to learn about the “UK’s relations with...the United Nations and the world as a global community”.

Further gains have been made in ensuring that students are taught specifics about the UN’s work. As a result of the Key Stage 3 citizenship consultations, which ended in April 2007, it has become compulsory to learn about the UK’s relationship with the international community “in the context of topical events such as conflict situations”.

Another change, in the Key Stage 4 (14-16 years) citizenship curriculum, is the specification that pupils study “international disagreements and conflict, and debates about inequalities, sustainability and use of the world’s resources”, as well as “investigating the effectiveness of the United Nations in supporting human rights and addressing inequalities”. A new requirement at this

level entails learning about the role of international humanitarian law in providing protection for victims of conflict and child soldiers.

In September UNA-UK submitted input to the QCA public consultation on the subject criteria for the new GCSE-level citizenship curriculum. We suggested that all citizenship topics – such as human rights, justice, democracy, development and conflict – needed to be considered in not only local and national but also international and global contexts.

UNA-UK’s educational work has a strong international focus, and includes support for Model UN initiatives in developing countries. To read more about this, see page 32. For more information about UNA-UK’s educational work contact Mark Rusling on rusling@una.org.uk or 020 7766 3459.

As reported in New World, a Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) consultation in 2006 proposed that all references to the UN be removed from the Key Stage 3 (11-14 years) programme of study for citizen-



Sixty years of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights



Stefanie Grant

Some reflections

As the recent demonstrations began in Burma, human rights violations were reported by e-mail, text message and digital photograph. ‘Citizen journalists’ recorded – often by the hour – the arrest of demonstrators, attacks on monks and shootings. These events were then reported by the international press, NGOs and some governments, as clear violations of the rights defined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

While this information made the outside world acutely aware of what was happening, it could not transform knowledge into rights protection. Nor did it prevent the Burmese government from cutting internet links and blocking mobile phones. The speed at which information travels is new, but the old dilemma remains: how can the citizens of a sovereign state be protected against rights violations by their own government? Can political leaders be deterred from using torture by the knowledge that they may one day be prosecuted under the expanding arm of international criminal law?

Since its adoption 60 years ago, the history of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights has been one of continuing effort to protect rights and overcome the argument – made in the Security Council today, just as it was in the Commission on Human Rights in 1947 – that responsive action constitutes an interference in domestic affairs.

This problem lay at the centre of the concerns of the Declaration’s drafters: they sought to prevent “a repetition of what happened in 1933, when Germany began to massacre its own nationals, and everybody...bowed, saying ‘Thou are sovereign and master in thine own house’”. Today, the situation in Darfur gives René Cassin’s words a continuing and tragic relevance.

The Declaration was itself a compromise document. The Human Rights Commission’s original proposal included an international human rights court, and a UN agency to monitor the human rights situation in member states. These were set aside in favour of a non-binding declaration of rights. The UK was one of those which initially favoured a legally binding convention, fearing a declaration would be too vague, and a “perpetual source of mischief”.

Throughout much of the Cold War period, support for human rights within the UN was at best passive, articulated in Dag Hammarskjöld’s metaphor of “a flying speed below which an airplane will not remain in the air”; he believed the human rights programme should remain “at that speed and no greater”. Until the mid-1970s, states were content to leave concern with human rights to the Human Rights Commission – then, as later, a largely political body which often acted as a weathervane of the international political climate.

But once the work of translating the broad principles of the Declaration into

legal rights got under way, and once the two covenants – the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) – had made human rights a matter of legal obligation, the Commission was joined by other, and eventually many other, UN institutions – political, legal and technical – in the work of developing and interpreting human rights. Women, children, migrant workers, and – most recently – those with disabilities now have their own treaties, which take the general rights in the Declaration, define the special protection needs of a particularly vulnerable group, and then set out the rights which individuals should enjoy, and states should protect.

Much has been written about the failures of human rights within the UN system. But it is easy to forget the political constraints imposed by member states, and especially the obstacles placed in the way of country monitoring. In the early years of the Human Rights Committee, which monitors implementation of the ICCPR, Amnesty International delivered its country reports personally to members, almost as *samizdat* documents, because the Secretariat was not allowed to distribute them. Ongoing controversy within the Commission, and now the Council, has focused on country mandates, and is a reminder both of the lengths to which states will go to avoid being named as human rights abusers, and of what will be achieved if the Universal Periodic Review is allowed to establish itself as an impartial monitoring mechanism.

The Last Ten Years

For much of the last decade, the Universal Declaration has not been served well by some of its oldest supporters, notably the US with its policies on human rights and the ‘war on terror’. But within the UN there have been important gains. Central to these was the 2005 UN World Summit’s endorsement of a new Human Rights Council, as well as its strong political backing for human rights ‘mainstreaming’ in all the UN’s work.

One result of Kofi Annan’s initial –



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1997 – call for mainstreaming was a process in which lawyers and development economists were forced to sit at the same table, and find a common language in which to translate normative principle into operational action. Included in this was the move to transform the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights from a small and technical support service for the Commission and treaty bodies into an intelligent and effective agency which could work in the field, using human rights principles to prevent violations and protect victims, as it now does in Nepal and Colombia.

By appointing Mary Robinson, and then Louise Arbour, Annan defined a powerful role for the new High Commissioner for Human Rights. The International Criminal Court has closed the perverse gap between protection under human rights law and punishment under international criminal law, in the case of the gravest breaches – genocide and crimes against humanity. Through their accession to some or all of the human rights treaties, all states are now legally bound to protect human rights in their countries, and to subject themselves to a review process which, if adequately funded (which it is not), and if states were willing to elect only highly qualified members to the treaty bodies (which they are not), would become a solid and dynamic building block for the international human rights court proposed in 1947. Despite the handicaps, these reviews can act as an early warning mechanism for escalating viola-

tions in states, and already set an important compass course for national action. Criticism of selectivity and double standards should not obscure the work done by some of the Human Rights Commission’s – and now the Council’s – thematic procedures. When the Commission defined a new mandate for internally displaced people, this population – of more than 20 million – was uncounted, unrecognised in human rights terms, and without legal definition. Francis Deng’s work, and that of Walter Kälin, Deng’s successor as the UN Secretary-General’s Special Representative on Internally Displaced Persons, has set protection standards and given visibility to a group which had been excluded from national or international protection. Outstanding protection work has been done in relation to human rights defenders. Individual experts – on torture, and on violence against women – have shown how much can be done to monitor the situation in member states, even with meagre resources, and in politically contested territory such as that surrounding detention in Guantánamo.

Ten years ago, the Commission took the innovative decision to create thematic mandates on social and economic rights. This was at first difficult to implement because little substantive work had been done to define the practical meaning of rights such as that to health, food and education, or to understand poverty in human rights terms; and it was not easy to find individuals with a knowledge of eco-

nomics as well as expertise in human rights. But again, and despite these obstacles, important work has been done on, for example, the right to health, through the combined efforts of UN Special Rapporteur Paul Hunt, the World Health Organization, and the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.

At the World Summit, states acknowledged a responsibility to protect, specifically against genocide, crimes against humanity, war crimes and ethnic cleansing. Speaking recently in New York, Louise Arbour argued that the responsibility to protect comes with a set of obligations which focus not on those with “the so-called right to intervene” but on those who need protection. This leads to a new understanding, in which sovereignty is no longer a shield against accountability and scrutiny, but carries the responsibilities which come with the ‘privilege of governing’.

She suggested that the responsibility to protect includes the responsibility to prevent, to react, and to rebuild – including through punishment. In institutional terms, the duty to prevent would ‘sit’ in the Human Rights Council; the responsibility to react should be in the Security Council; and the responsibility to rebuild in the International Criminal Court and similar bodies, and in the Peacebuilding Commission.

The Challenges Ahead

One challenge for the next decade will be to develop analysis, action and political consensus along these lines. Another is to accept that – again in Louise Arbour’s words – we have done a “pretty good job” articulating the international human rights framework, but a “mediocre job” at implementing even the most basic of these rights. A useful first step would be for members of the Human Rights Council to direct their energies away from political division and towards enforcement of the recommendations of the Council’s own experts and of the treaty bodies. A third is to reverse the damage – direct and collateral – inflicted on the values of the Universal Declaration by the situation in Iraq and the Middle East.

There is much work to be done.

Stefanie Grant is a lawyer specialising in migration and refugee issues. She served formerly with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, as head of its research and development branch. She was previously director of Amnesty International’s research department.

The legacy of Eleanor Roosevelt

Human rights champions over six decades

2008 marks the 60th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. On 10 December 2007, UNA-UK will join the UN in beginning a year-long commemoration of the Declaration.

On 10 December 1948, the UN General Assembly adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the first major international articulation of the rights owed to “all members of the human family”.

The Declaration does not impose legal obligations upon states, but it has served as the edifice for constructing international human rights agreements which *are* legally binding. And so, today, states are required under international law to guarantee for their citizens a raft of basic rights and freedoms, spanning civil and political rights, economic and social rights, racial equality, the rights of women, children’s rights and much else – all of which were extrapolated from the Declaration.

The Declaration was born out of the efforts of many individuals, but one person stands out: Eleanor Roosevelt, who as the first chair of the UN Commission on Human Rights led the team which drafted the Declaration. She has innumerable successors – individuals who have campaigned, struggled and, in all too many cases, died to secure respect for human rights.

On these pages we pay tribute to a few of these human rights champions – some famous, some virtually unknown.



Ludwig Guttmann

German-born neurologist who fled to Britain in 1939. After World War II Guttmann began using sport to rehabilitate veterans with spinal injuries. He set up competitions between his patients and those at other hospitals. In 1960, he took 400 wheelchair users to the Olympics in Rome, and the ‘Parallel’ Olympics – or ‘Paralympics’ – was born. Guttmann, who died in 1980, is considered one of the early champions of disability rights.

The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities was adopted by the UN in December 2006.

Photo © Jewish Sports Legends/International Jewish Sports Hall of Fame, Netanya, Israel



Steve Biko

Noted anti-apartheid activist in South Africa in the 1960s and early 1970s. In 1973, the apartheid government imposed a ban on him, restricting his movement and prohibiting him from speaking to more than one person at a time. In 1977, he was arrested at a roadblock and later died in police custody. The police claimed that his death was caused by an extended hunger strike but it was discovered that he had in fact sustained serious

head injuries. The policemen accused of killing Biko were never prosecuted. This – and Biko’s fame – raised public awareness of the extent of the brutality and injustice of the South African apartheid regime.

The International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, adopted by the UN in 1965, specifically condemns apartheid policies.

Photo © Gettyimages

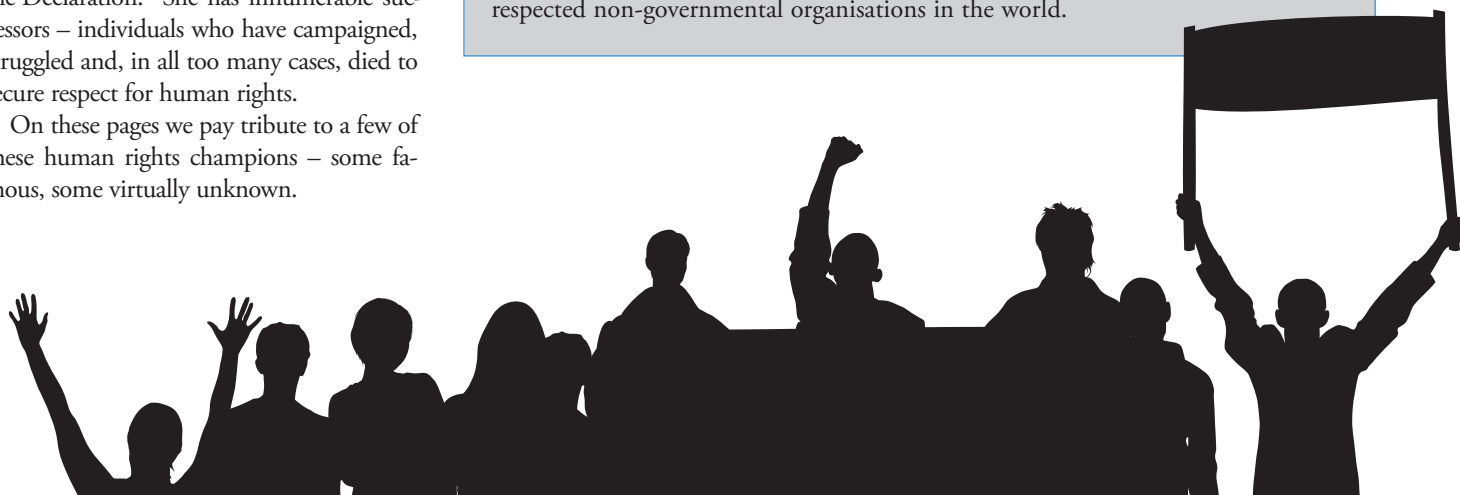


Peter Benenson

British lawyer and founder of Amnesty International. In 1961, Benenson read of the arrest and sentencing to seven years in prison of two Portuguese students, who had simply raised their glasses to ‘freedom’. Galvanised by this he wrote to the *Observer*. His letter, entitled ‘The Forgotten Prisoners’, was published: it asked that readers write letters of support for the students, and AI was set up that same year to coordinate the campaign. Today AI is one of the most influential and

respected non-governmental organisations in the world.

Photo © Amnesty International





Azucena Villaflor

Argentinian activist and one of the founders of the Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo, set up during the 'Dirty War' to raise awareness of the 'desaparecidos', or the 'disappeared'. These were victims of enforced disappearance, abducted and often killed, their bodies disposed of so as never to be found. Villaflor herself became one of the disappeared: she vanished on Human Rights Day (10 December) in 1977, after the Mothers went public internationally with a list of their missing children. Her body was identified in 2005, the injuries

consistent with a fall from a 'death flight', when prisoners were drugged, stripped and flung out of a plane.

In 2006, the UN adopted the International Convention on the Protection of all Persons from Enforced Disappearance, which will enter into force after it has received 20 ratifications.

Photo © Gettyimages



Ken Saro-Wiwa

Nigerian poet, novelist and environmental and social activist. In the early 1990s, Saro-Wiwa led a non-violent campaign to protest against the environmental damage caused by multinational oil companies, and to demand a fair share of the profits from oil exploitation for the Ogoni people of the Niger Delta. In 1995, after a show trial, he and eight others were executed by the Nigerian military, sparking international outrage. The day after the executions, Nigeria was expelled from the Commonwealth and the EU imposed sanctions on the country.

Common Article One of the two International Covenants – on Civil and Political Rights and on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights – states that “all peoples may, for their own ends, freely dispose of their natural wealth and resources”.

Photo © Greenpeace/Lambon



Anna Politkovskaya

Russian journalist and human rights activist well-known for her outspoken reporting from Chechnya, and for her opposition to President Putin. Once arrested and subjected to a mock execution by Russian military forces, she also survived a suspected poisoning attempt in 2004. In 2006, at 48 years of age, she was shot dead in the elevator of her apartment building. Several people have been arrested in connection with her murder but the investigation has so far been inconclusive.

Article 19 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights guarantees “the right to freedom of expression [which] shall include the right to seek, receive and impart information and ideas of all kinds”.

Photo © Arch Tait



Shirin Ebadi

Iranian lawyer and outspoken advocate for democracy and greater rights for Iranian women and children. Ebadi was her country's first female judge but was forced to step down with the overthrow of the Shah in 1979 and the installation of the Islamic Republic,

when it was decided that women were unsuitable for such positions. She set up a law practice and has often acted in politically contentious cases, bringing her into conflict with Iran's conservative clerics and winning her the respect of the international community. In 2003 she was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize, the first Muslim woman to achieve this distinction.

The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women was adopted by the UN in 1979.

Photo © Gettyimages





Olayinka Koso-Thomas

Nigerian gynaecologist and advocate for the abolition of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) in Sierra Leone, where the practice is secretive, legal and widespread, and where the practitioners – mostly women – wield formidable power in politics and society. Koso-Thomas has been campaigning against FGM for 15 years despite threats and harassment. FGM is most often carried out on girls between the ages of four and eight and has serious health risks, including chronic infections, intermittent bleeding, complications during birth, and even death.

Article 12 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights recognises the right of all individuals to “the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health”.



Sheila Watt-Cloutier

Inuit activist and political representative who has argued that human-induced climate change could contravene human rights. In 2005 Watt-Cloutier filed a legal petition claiming that the US government’s climate change policies were violating the human rights of the Inuit people, whose way of life is under threat because of global warming. The Inuit are an indigenous people whose survival as a group depends on its relationship to the Arctic, where temperatures are rising at approximately twice the global average.

In September 2007, the UN adopted the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, which confirms the right of indigenous groups to self-determination and recognises their rights with respect to land and resources.

Photo © Gettyimages



Aung San Suu Kyi

Burmese pro-democracy activist and leader of the National League for Democracy, which decisively won the country’s general elections in 1990 but was then blocked by the military from forming the government. Suu Kyi was subsequently detained

and has been under house arrest for almost 12 of the last 18 years. In 1991 she was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for her non-violent struggle against the military dictatorship.

Photo © Gettyimages

Who is your human rights hero?

Send us 100 words arguing the case for a particular human rights champion. You could choose someone from these pages, or a woman, man or group you think is conspicuously missing.

One entry will be chosen, and the submitter will win a free copy of THE OXFORD HANDBOOK ON THE UNITED NATIONS, edited by UNA-UK Executive Director Sam Daws and Professor Tom Weiss of City University, New York.

‘Human Rights Hero’ submissions should be sent to Natalie Samarasinghe at samarasinghe@una.org.uk or UNA-UK, 3 Whitehall Court, London SW1A 2EL



The Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples: what is its significance?

“Indigenous communities, peoples and nations are those which, having a historical continuity with pre-invasion and pre-colonial societies that developed on their territories, consider themselves distinct...and are determined to preserve, develop and transmit to future generations their ancestral territories, and their ethnic identity, as the basis of their continued existence as peoples”

Jose R. Martinez Cobo

Study of the Problem of Discrimination against Indigenous Populations, 1986

Introduction

On 13 September, the UN General Assembly adopted the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. The document received strong support, with 143 states voting in favour, 11 abstaining, and four voting against. The endorsement follows more than two decades of contentious negotiations.

The Declaration sets out the individual and collective rights of the world’s indigenous peoples, calls for the protection of their cultural identities, and emphasises their right to pursue development in keeping with their own needs. Like all declarations, the document is not legally binding. However, declarations do carry moral and normative force, and can influence the conduct of states; to the extent that states do alter their behaviour, international custom-

ary law may be created. The Declaration is thus significant for two reasons: for recognising and seeking to address the special vulnerability of indigenous people; and for giving impetus to collective rights, an incipient human rights norm.

Indigenous peoples as a vulnerable group

Many of the Declaration’s provisions are not new. Rather, they relate existing rights – specifically those enshrined in the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights – to indigenous individuals. In so doing, the Declaration recognises that existing international law has not been able to secure adequate rights protection for indigenous peoples. It also recognises that guaranteeing the rights of this group calls for a dedicated human rights instrument, as has happened in the case of women, children and the disabled.

Indigenous peoples, of whom there are an estimated 370 million, are among the world’s most disadvantaged. Indigenous peoples make up 5 per cent of the global population but constitute 15 per cent of the world’s poor. In their countries, they suffer markedly higher rates of landlessness, malnutrition and internal displacement, and have lower levels of literacy and access to health services. The International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) has said that living conditions on Canadian ‘Indian’ reserves are on a par with a country ranked 78th in the Human Development Index. In the same index, Canada, as a whole, placed sixth.

Compounding this marginalisation are widespread discrimination, systematic rights-violations, exclusion from decision-making bodies and a lack of information in indigenous languages. The UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues notes that indigenous peoples are still largely ‘invisible’ from civil society consultations and data collection, even within UN-led efforts to reach the Millennium

Development Goals. The result is that development initiatives are neither geared to deliver gains for indigenous peoples nor configured to preserve indigenous ways of life.

The Declaration aims to address this marginalisation. It calls for improved political participation by indigenous peoples and access to information – for example, by providing for the right to establish indigenous media. States are asked, furthermore, to obtain the free, prior consent of indigenous peoples before adopting any legislative or administrative measures that may affect them.

A step towards greater recognition of group rights

The international law of human rights has been defined as “the law that deals with the protection of individuals and groups against violations of their internationally guaranteed rights, and with the promotion of these rights”. But while human rights have an individual and a collective dimension, the latter is less clearly defined. The Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, with its explicit reference to group rights, lends normative weight to the status of collective rights within international law.

Only two groups are currently recognised as rights-bearing in international human rights law: the ‘family’ and the ‘people’, the latter a term that has not been defined in any UN instrument. Common Article One of the two international covenants states that all peoples have the right of self-determination. They can freely determine their political status and dispose of their natural resources, and must not be deprived of their own means of subsistence. Before the Declaration was adopted this constituted the only explicit expression of collective rights in the international human rights regime.

The Declaration gives substance to Common Article One through multiple collective rights. Article 3 reiterates the right to self-determination. Article 4 addresses autonomy. Article 5 provides for the right to maintain distinct political, economic, social and

cultural institutions. Article 26 grants rights to lands and resources. The Declaration also provides for redress – for the violation of both individual rights and collective land ownership. Again, the Declaration is the first to offer mechanisms of redress for a group.

Why the delay?

Indigenous issues made it onto the international agenda in 1986, upon the completion of a seminal study by José R. Martínez Cobo, the first UN Special Rapporteur on indigenous issues. His efforts led to the creation of the Working Group on Indigenous Populations, which then began work on a draft declaration. In 1993, the completed draft was forwarded to the then-Commission on Human Rights. It was only in 2006 that the newly created Human Rights Council endorsed the draft and recommended it to the General Assembly.

Why did it take 22 years for the Declaration to be adopted? The main sticking point has been over the text's espousal of collective rights, of which states have been traditionally wary, viewing them as a potential challenge to the 'monopolistic jurisdiction' of the state. Collective rights to lands and resources have in particular roused opposition, states arguing, for example, that the provision calling for the respect of indigenous land tenure systems could conflict with national property laws and challenge legitimate ownership by others. Similarly, giving indigenous peoples a measure of control over natural resources could get in the way of a government's (or a foreign investor's) plans.

Countries with substantial indigenous populations have traditionally been the most reluctant to give more formal protection to indigenous peoples in international human rights law. Australia, Canada, New Zealand and the United States all voted against the Declaration, concerned that it effectively arms indigenous peoples with a veto over national legislation and state management of resources. Canada argued that the Declaration would hamstring states, preventing them from acting "without the consent of indigenous peoples" even in "matters of gen-



Photo © UN Photo

eral policy affecting both indigenous and non-indigenous peoples". Some states also fear that the recognition of collective rights could undermine individual rights. The Australian government has stated that indigenous customary law, for example, may "permit the exercise of practices which would not be acceptable", such as corporal punishment.

The UK was among those which signed the Declaration, because of the agreement's perceived use as a "policy tool". However, it qualified its support. The FCO issued an interpretative statement, saying, "We do not accept that some groups in society should benefit from human rights that are not available to others [...] We therefore do not accept the concept of collective human rights."

Conclusion

As a vulnerable group, indigenous peoples need the special protection of a dedicated international instrument. Indigenous peoples' existence is inextricably linked not just to their environments but also to the preservation of their cultures and their languages, which have no meaning in the absence of the group.

The UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples therefore represents a significant breakthrough – in strengthening the rights of indigenous peoples and, with its recognition of group rights, in potentially opening up new normative ground. But it is not enough. Work will need to continue in order to translate the rights expressed in the Declaration into tangible benefits for indigenous peoples.

Parliament



UNA-UK lobbies on Middle East

In August the House of Commons Foreign Affairs Select Committee published the report of its inquiry into 'Global Security: The Middle East', containing recommendations for the government's future role in the region and for the work of the Quartet. Following UNA-UK Annual Conference 2007, UNA-UK submitted written evidence to the inquiry (for details, see box below).

The report is strongly supportive of the Quartet's three principles for engaging with Palestinian groups: non-violence; recognition of Israel; and commitment to previous agreements and UN Security Council resolutions. But while elements of the Quartet

UNA-UK outlined the existing work of the UN in the region and made the following recommendations:

- All parties to the Arab-Israeli dispute should be encouraged to engage in multilateral political negotiations facilitated by the Quartet.
- The Quartet should focus on a future settlement involving all regional actors, based on the Quartet's three principles. This should embrace the issue of the Israeli and Palestinian borders, the status of Jerusalem, and Palestinian refugees.
- There should be no preconditions to negotiations between Israel and the Palestinian Authority.
- The Quartet should build upon the Arab Peace Initiative and work constructively with other Middle Eastern states.
- Efforts should be made to work towards the resolution of all disputes in the Middle East, including those involving Syria and Iran.
- The Quartet should also pursue the long-term aim of a WMD-free Middle East.

UNA-UK's full submission can be seen at www.una.org.uk/parliament, where you can also read UNA-UK Chair Lord Hannay's recent correspondence with the Foreign & Commonwealth Office about the Middle East peace process.

treat these principles as preconditions for engagement with Hamas, the select committee recommends that the government "urgently consider ways of engaging politically" with moderate Hamas groups, in order to encourage them to meet the Quartet principles. The committee also advises the government to engage with Hezbollah parliamentarians, while continuing to refuse to engage with Hezbollah's military wing.

The EU's decision not to modify its financial boycott of the Palestinian Authority following the formation of a Palestinian national unity government in February 2007 is criticised as "very damaging". By maintaining the boycott, the committee says, the international community failed to reward those elements within the national unity government that respected the Quartet principles.

The House of Lords EU Select Committee has also published a report on the Middle East peace process. Released on 24 July, the report calls on the EU to "maintain a peace process that is as inclusive as possible", and urges the EU and the government to apply the Quartet's three principles "in future with a reasonable amount of flexibility". The committee considers that adherence to principles of non-violence, and to previous collective Arab agreements (such as the Arab Peace Initiative of March 2007), should be viewed as preconditions to negotiations with Hamas. But it questions the Quartet's requirement that Hamas recognise Israel before negotiations can take place, arguing that this stipulation "amalgamate[s] elements of any final status negotiations with the preliminaries to such negotiations".

To view the reports visit www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/select.htm

UNA-UK pushes diplomatic engagement on Iran's nuclear programme

On 9 August UNA-UK Chair Lord Hannay wrote to the Foreign Secretary expressing UNA-UK's deep concern over the failure of efforts to date to find a peaceful and negotiated diplomatic solution to the problems arising from Iran's nuclear programme.

A central recommendation in the letter urges the government to encourage the US to

engage in direct and unconditional dialogue with Iran. Lord Hannay writes:

"Experience in dealing with North Korea has demonstrated that a dialogue of this sort, in which the United States plays a direct role, is essential if progress is to be made. But in North Korea's case the engagement in such a dialogue was not made dependent on any precondition required of the North Korean government. In the light of that experience the time has surely come now to make an offer of such an unconditional dialogue to Iran."

UNA-UK has also been pressing for the establishment of an international nuclear fuel bank that would provide countries with enriched uranium for civil use without the danger that it could be diverted for nuclear weapons purposes. We are therefore encour-

'the time has surely come now to make an offer of such an unconditional dialogue to Iran'

aged by the growing international support for initiatives such as the US-led Global Nuclear Energy Partnership, under which certain states would supply uranium fuel to other countries and then retrieve it for reprocessing.

Lord Hannay's letter can be read at www.una.org.uk/parliament. For more information about the Global Nuclear Energy Partnership visit www.gnep.energy.gov

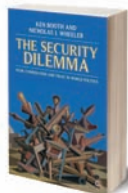
On 21 September Lord Hannay appeared on BBC World Service Television to discuss Iran's enrichment activities and the international community's efforts to curtail them. A video recording is posted on UNA-UK's website: www.una.org.uk/video.html

All queries about UNA-UK's policy positions on the Middle East should be directed to Mark Rusling, UNA-UK Campaigns & Education Officer, on rusling@una.org.uk or 020 7766 3459.

Resources



Books



The Security Dilemma: Fear, Cooperation, and Trust in World Politics

Ken Booth and Nicholas Wheeler
Palgrave Macmillan
November 2007

This work examines the uncertainty which confronts decision-makers when assessing the intentions of other states and entities with the actual capability, or future potential, to do harm. The book explores how policy-makers deal with security dilemmas and the possibilities of mitigating or transcending them.

www.palgrave.com

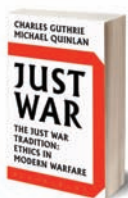


Beyond Terror: The Truth About the Real Threat to Our World

Chris Abbott,
Paul Rogers
and John Sloboda
Random House
April 2007

Beyond Terror argues that the Western response to 9/11 has been a failure and a distraction from more important threats, such as climate change and resource scarcity. The authors predict that, without organised action within the next decade, our world will become highly unstable by the middle of the century.

www.oxfordresearchgroup.org.uk



Just War: The Just War Tradition: Ethics in Modern Warfare

Charles Guthrie
and Michael Quinlan
Walker & Company
October 2007

This book traces the origin of the just war tradition, from its roots in Christian thinking through to today. Using Kosovo, Afghanistan and Iraq as examples, the authors re-examine the tenets of the tradition and set out the case for a credible moral framework for waging modern war.

www.walkerbooks.com



War In Our Time: Reflections on Iraq, Terrorism and Weapons of Mass Destruction

Ramesh Thakur
United Nations University Press
June 2007

This is a compilation of Ramesh Thakur's opinion articles published in major newspapers around the world. The book deals with three topics – the Iraq war, the war on terror, and weapons of mass destruction – among the most critical issues of today.

www.unu.edu/unupress

Who's Who in Public International Law 2007

Jennifer Byford (ed.)
Crestwall
July 2007

Masterminded by Sir Eli Lauterpacht of the University of Cambridge, this reference work serves as a directory of the world's leading academics and practising lawyers in the field of contemporary public international law. The 650 entries include four members of UNA-UK's Advisory Panel – Professor Christine Chinkin, Professor Sir Nigel Rodley, Elizabeth Wilmshurst and Sir Michael Wood – as well as UNA-UK Executive Director Sam Daws.

www.crestwall.com



Up until 31 December 2007 you can still claim your UNA member/supporter discount on the hardback edition of *The Oxford Handbook on the United Nations*,

edited by UNA-UK Executive Director Sam Daws and Professor Tom Weiss of City University, New York.

To save 30 per cent of the full price of £85, visit www.oup.co.uk/sale/socsci/OHUN07 or quote OHUN07 when you:

Call: 01536 741 727

E-mail: bookorders.uk@oup.com

Write to: Direct Sales Department, Oxford University Press, Corby NN18 9BR

The UN Online

- The UN General Assembly has wrapped up its annual high-level segment in New York. To find out which world leaders said what, visit www.un.org/ga
- Leaders at the GA urged action on Darfur, following the Secretary-General's 30 August report on the deployment of the AU-UN force. To keep up to date visit www.un.org/Docs/sc/sgrep07.htm
- Meanwhile, the WHO has said that global public health security is at increased risk from outbreaks of disease, natural disasters and industrial accidents. Go to www.who.int/whr/2007/en/index.html
- The EU is one of the UN's key partners. So it is good news that the European Commission and the UN are collaborating to improve aid effectiveness through better integration of gender equality and women's rights into aid agreements. Visit www.gendermatters.eu
- Indigenous peoples are vulnerable groups, and within these populations women are often worst off. The UN has put together a series of case studies to get to grips with the challenges that indigenous women face. See www.un.org/esa/socdev/publications/Indigenous/indwomen07.htm

Directory of UN Doctoral Research

UNA-UK is compiling a new Directory of UN Doctoral Research. The directory is intended to raise awareness among academics engaged in research on the UN of work being done by peers. Once established, it will also provide a means of publicising this work to policy-makers, NGOs, the media and the wider public. If you are working on a thesis on the UN or an aspect of its work, or if you have recently published one, go to www.una.org.uk/experts_academics.html and fill in the online form.

Funding possibilities

In the next issue of *New World*, UNA-UK will provide details of charitable funding from the Gilbert Murray Charitable Trust, which makes small annual grants in support of doctoral research trips concerned with the work of the United Nations.

Letters

send your letters to:

Veronica Lie, UNA-UK, 3 Whitehall Court, London SW1A 2EL
e-mail: lie@una.org.uk



What the General said

General David Petraeus, the head of the US military in Iraq, has published his report assessing the military situation in the country. The report appears to be quite factual, providing figures showing the number of suicide bombings and the declining incidence of roadside-bomb attacks on forces.

While the tone of the report is generally positive, the majority of Democratic senators seem unsatisfied. And public opinion perceives the situation as falling well below expectations in terms of military, security, and political objectives.

It may be that Petraeus's facts are correct. Yet I feel, like many in the US, that this report was guided not by any direct political pressure but by the knowledge that the stakes were very high for President Bush, the General's boss and Commander-in-Chief of the US armed forces, and his Republican administration.

In my opinion, the issue of Iraq has made America one of the most disliked countries in the world; I believe that this administration has done more to destroy the country's image than any other in modern American political history. General Petraeus's report may well restore some credibility to the American military, which had to execute actions planned by the Pentagon. Many fingers point to Donald Rumsfeld.

The obvious conclusion to be drawn is: the buck should stop not with the military but at the top levels of the Pentagon and the White House.

David J. Thomas
Porthcawl, Mid Glamorgan

ICJ advisory opinions

In addition to judgments on legal disputes brought before it by states, the International Court of Justice has another important function: the issuing of advisory opinions at the request of organs and agencies of the United Nations.

At a recent meeting hosted by UNA Edinburgh in partnership with Scottish CND and Scotland's for Peace, John

Mayer QC told us that ICJ advisory opinions constitute formal international law and were only 'advisory' in the sense that they advised the UN Secretary-General (or whichever UN body had made the request) that this was the opinion of the ICJ.

Advisory opinions are potentially an important – but little-used – approach to resolving world problems. When the ICJ responds to a request by a UN body (as it did, for example, in 1996, to a request by the General Assembly about the legality of the threat or use of nuclear weapons), the resultant opinion of the Court, while not legally binding on any affected party, carries strong legal and moral weight in that it is the official pronouncement of the principal judicial organ of the United Nations.

Alec Gaines

On behalf of the branch committee
of UNA Edinburgh

More plaudits for Robert Jackson

I was very pleased to see the listing, in the April-June 2007 issue of *New World*, of *Jacko, Where Are You Now?*, a book about the life of Robert Jackson by James Gibson (Parsons Publishing, 2006).

Jackson was a master of disaster relief who understood how to negotiate between different political beliefs and realities, and grasped the practicalities of arranging speedy shipping and transport – so necessary to the success of UN relief ventures.

His very remarkable achievements need to be understood by present-day UN administrators and NGO operators.

Brenda Bailey
East Finchley, London

New World or The Tatler?

When I first flicked through the July-September 2007 issue of *New World* I wondered if I had been sent the wrong journal – surely all those pictures of partying people were part of a society or celebrity magazine and not the house journal of

'the UK's leading independent policy authority on the United Nations'? Further investigation showed that it was, indeed, the right magazine.

But the content still seemed wrong: 20 per cent was devoted to publicity associated with *The Oxford Handbook on the United Nations* – a highly creditable production described in solid detail in the centre pages in an advertisement paid for by Oxford University Press. However, there followed six more pages of editorial matter consisting mainly of photographs. Most of these were pictures of individuals partying, with wine glasses at the ready and set smiles for the benefit of the camera.

Is this really the sort of material that UNA members want to see in *New World*, the only literature that most of them receive these days? And if so, do they look forward to such a plethora of this material, which is probably only of interest to the subjects portrayed and their friends? I doubt it.

To devote so much precious space and money to material more suited to a celebrity magazine is, to my mind, seriously irresponsible. I began to wonder whether the front-cover title about the MDGs – 'On track or derailed?' – applied to much else in the journal. UNA members look to *New World* for information about the UN and its agencies, so deplorably absent from the media. They can find more than enough pictures of partying people elsewhere.

Harold Stern
Ealing, London

Editor's note:

The July-September 2007 issue of New World in fact allots 12.5 per cent (six of 48 pages) to cover two high-level events connected to the publication of The Oxford Handbook on the UN – one in London featuring Lord Malloch-Brown, Professor Sir Adam Roberts, Dr Ngaire Woods, and Ambassador Nick Thorne, and one in New York featuring the Deputy Secretary-General of the United Nations. Forty pages contain coverage of a range of UN issues, including the UN Human Rights Council, the death penalty, the Millennium Development Goals, and much more "information about the UN and its agencies".

Arthur Ross

A personal tribute from Lord Hannay of Chiswick

The news of the death of Arthur Ross, Honorary President of the World Federation of UN Associations (WFUNA), at the age of 96, is a sad blow to all who knew him and to all those who, like him, work tirelessly to make the UN more effective, better understood and more strongly supported by ordinary people.

For many years, Arthur Ross was a pillar of the UN Association of the United States, never hesitating to criticise his own government when he thought it was making mistakes, as he

did over Vietnam and Iraq, and over non-payment of UN dues. He was convinced of the need for a world grouping to bring together the UN Associations of different member states and to be able to act as both an advocate and a critic of the UN itself. With that objective, he almost single-handedly rescued WFUNA from the dire financial and political straits into which it had fallen over the years. Faced with much discouragement and often divided counsels, he simply would not give up and, through the Friends of WFUNA, which

he founded, brought essential backing to the World Federation.

To his friends, who were legion, Arthur was simply a wonderful, warm, intelligent and thought-provoking person. To the very end of his life he followed world events closely, always looking for a useful role the UN could play, always sharing deep sympathy for those suffering from war, disease and poverty, always seeking some practical steps aimed at making the world a better place.

I often told Arthur that his abounding energy and determination were to be discouraged as they put all of us younger than he to shame. The world will be a poorer place without him.

Arthur Ross was a prolific philanthropist who committed himself to a swathe of causes, ranging from developing New York parks to supporting the United Nations. He served on US delegations to several UN bodies, was Vice-Chair of the UN Association of the US and spent his last decade as Honorary President of WFUNA.

“Big I’m not, but I am interested, and I can give some time.”

Arthur Ross, interview with the New York Times, 1971



Arthur Ross with former UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan

Photo © WFUNA

Realising UNA-UK's potential through an active membership



Sam Daws

UNA-UK

The United Nations Association of the UK



The UN is in the news as never before. Ever more complex 'problems without passports' require solutions that transcend borders. And UNA-UK's members continue to play a pivotal role in showing how the UN is at the centre of efforts to find these solutions. You will find in this section of New World inspiring examples of how UNA-UK's regions and branches have sought to bring the UN to new audiences.

UNA-UK will this year seek to improve its effectiveness. An EGM will be held on 27 November 2007 to take forward the streamlining of the Board of Directors (see page 28). On 3 November the Board of Directors will review the results of the UK-

wide branch health check and begin consultations on what structures can most effectively support and galvanise our members and supporters in the future.

In the meantime, with government departments facing budget cuts, and legacy income at an all-time low, we urgently need money to continue our campaigns and educational work. If you can afford to make a donation to the UNA Trust – as an individual, a branch or a region – please send one today, marked for my personal attention. Donations of any size are warmly welcome. Those of £100 or more will be acknowledged on UNA-UK's website and in our annual reports (unless a donor asks to remain anonymous).

The Membership at Work . . .

UNA London & South-East Region

Neville Grant, the region's chair, introduces a summary of the keynote presentation delivered at London & South-East's summer council meeting.

On 7 July, the region held its summer council meeting at Lewes, East Sussex. The guest speaker was Carlos Fortin, a highly regarded academic at the Institute of Development Studies at the University of Sussex, with a distinguished record with UNCTAD.

Much of the debate on UN reform is cast in political terms – for example, which countries should be added to the Security Council's membership to make it more representative of today's international system? But as 80 per cent of the UN's work falls within the social and economic fields, perhaps a more pressing question is how the UN can be made stronger and more effective in these areas.

But Dr Fortin explained in his presentation that, while economic and social

reform of the UN is important, prospects for success are uncertain. Notable challenges stand in the way, not least deep divisions between developing and developed countries over what the role of the UN should actually be in international social and economic management.

'UN Reform in the Economic and Social Fields', by Carlos Fortin, former Deputy Secretary-General of the UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD)

Over the last three decades, a number of reform plans have been put forward targeting the way in which the United Nations carries out its work in the economic and social spheres. Yet progress towards reform has been slow and halting.

A key reason for this stems from the institutional and bureaucratic complexity of the UN's economic and social machinery – an apparatus which encompasses the UN organisation proper, including 13 departments, funds and programmes; the specialised agencies in the economic and social field (of which there are also 13); the Bretton Woods institutions which, though technically specialised agencies, operate with complete autonomy; and the World Trade Organization (WTO), which is not a specialised agency at all and maintains only limited links with the UN.

In light of this multiplicity, and the duplication of effort it inevitably engenders, there has been broad agreement among governments about the need for



Photo © UNDP

better coordination and greater coherence. Both the 2005 UN World Summit Outcome and the 2006 Report of the UN High-level Panel on System-wide Coherence have this as a central concern.

However, this apparent unanimity unravels when one asks: what is meant by coherence? Any answer to this question must address the UN's relationship to the Bretton Woods institutions and the WTO; and on this point, developed and developing countries have starkly divergent views.

For most developing countries the key objective of reform is to strengthen the UN's role in international economic and development policy. 'Coherence', according to this perspective, will be achieved by the UN acting in a coordinating capacity vis-à-vis the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund and the WTO. This is because developing countries perceive the UN as a better representative of their interests and concerns, while the other institutions are seen as vehicles for serving the interests of developed countries.

Developed countries, by contrast, would by and large argue for the delimitation of the UN's economic and social role to the provision of technical assistance and environmental protection, and to 'niche' areas such as conflict prevention and post-conflict reconstruction, domestic governance and gender equality. In this view, all major economic matters should be reserved for the Bretton Woods institutions and the WTO. 'Coherence', according to developed countries, means making the UN more effective in the residual areas. It is this view that has so far prevailed.

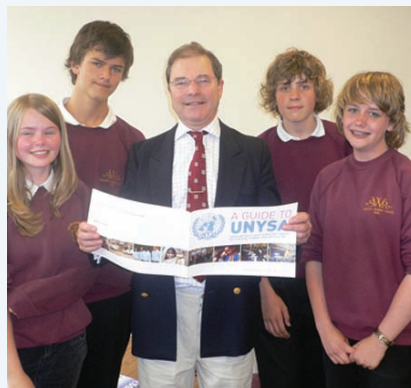
This divide is unlikely to be bridged in the near future. While some progress towards institutional and bureaucratic coordination is possible, the role of the UN in the economic and social fields will in all probability remain disputed, with the UN likely to remain a relatively minor actor as compared to the Bretton Woods institutions and the WTO.

UNA East Gloucestershire

Chris Dickenson, the branch's secretary, reports on efforts to show students the link between the UN and Gloucestershire.

Gloucestershire is not a place you would necessarily associate with one of

the UN's greatest achievements: the eradication of smallpox in 1979. But it was Dr Edward Jenner of Berkeley who created the vaccine used by the UN to conquer the disease. And Archway, a school in Stroud, is named after a memorial to commemorate the end of the slave trade; with some estimates putting the number of people trapped into 'modern slavery' at 27 million, the UN still has a lot of work to do.



Geoffrey Clifton-Brown MP with local students

It is with stories like these that UNA East Gloucestershire and Geoffrey Clifton-Brown, MP for the Cotswolds and Shadow Minister for International Trade, engage local students in county debates. Now in their second year, these debates have shown conclusively that the young people here are brimming with views on a range of issues – on Iraq, terrorism and the G8, and even on whether Tony Blair, in his role as a Quartet envoy, can achieve progress in the Middle East.

UNA Mid-Cornwall

Barbara Smith, secretary to the branch, recruits her eloquent young granddaughter to talk to Mid-Cornwall UNA.

On 29 June, 13 year-old Holly Smith spoke to the branch about her visit in February to the UN in New York. She was representing the Baha'i Faith and was among hundreds of young women from across the globe actively taking part in the UN conference on the 'Elimination of all forms of discrimination and violence against the girl child'.

She said, "In the eight days I was at the UN I met so many girls and women from all over the world, and they all had amazing stories to tell. Although I was probably the youngest, they all treated me with respect and I

didn't feel shy to join in. Sadly, some of those I met had experienced degradation, domestic violence and a lack of basic rights and privileges. Listening to stories from so many countries made me realise that family life has the greatest influence on who we are and how we contribute to society."

How inspiring for us to have such a young person giving our group such an excellent talk!

UNA Southern Counties

Fanny Lines, the region's honorary secretary, gives an account of Southern Counties' Annual Conference, entitled 'The United Nations and People on the Move'.

This conference, held on 1-2 September, was very successful, and aimed to highlight the plight of refugees, asylum seekers and migrant workers. Participants went away intent on making a difference and better equipped to lobby local councils and help counteract the negative bias in media reporting on these groups.

We had speakers from several prominent organisations working in these areas. The first to address us was Peter Kessler, a senior staff member from the UN Refugee Agency in London, who gave a stimulating talk entitled 'UNHCR and the Global Protection of Refugees'. His speech is available to read on the UNA-UK website. I urge you to read it!



Photo © UNHCR/Susan Hopper

Peter Kessler, Senior External Affairs Officer at UNHCR in London, said, "UNA-UK has a great and dedicated membership, and it is very pleasing to know of their support for and interest in UNHCR's global mission."

Farewells and tributes to Mike Wood as he leaves UNA-UK



On 11 July, UNA-UK members joined current and former staff and volunteers to pay tribute to Mike Wood, who has left the Association after 37 years of service.

Mike's farewell party attracted large numbers, testament to the indelible impact he has made over the years on the organisation's membership. UNA-UK Executive Director Sam Daws and two of his predecessors – Malcolm Harper and Frank Field – thanked Mike for his extraordinary service to the Association; and Neville Grant, Chair of UNA London & South-East Region, expressed warm gratitude to Mike on behalf of the region.



Sam expresses thanks on behalf of UNA-UK, before leading a toast to Mike and presenting him with a gift



Malcolm recalls his long association with Mike



Left to right: Malcolm Harper, Frank Field, Mike Wood, Sam Daws and Diane Wood

Frank Field Executive Director of UNA-UK 1973-1976:

"I am so very happy to be here tonight among friends, all of whom are united in service to a great cause. From time to time, we pay tribute to this service. UNA-UK Directors, all of whom I have known, from Charles Judd to Sam Daws, are often thanked. And rightly so. But equally deserving of recognition and gratitude are those – like our good friend Mike – who have served in less public roles. So tonight let us join in thanking Mike by saying: 'Like directors and holders of high offices you are part of a long tradition in which you have distinguished yourself and earned our gratitude. On behalf of us all, thank you.'"

Malcolm Harper Executive Director of UNA-UK 1982-2003:

"When I was appointed Director of UNA, I asked John Ferguson, who was the organisation's chair at the time, for more information about the Association. He advised, 'Malcolm, you could do nothing better than consult Mike Wood, who has more experience of and knowl-

edge about UNA-UK than anyone else.' And so it proved to be: Mike was an unending source of information and a great colleague in his own right."

Sam Daws Executive Director of UNA-UK 2004-present:

"Mike, I know you have opened a few letters in your time at UNA-UK – probably a good number from Prime Ministers and UN Secretaries-General. Hence why we are presenting you with an engraved, solid silver letter-opener from Asprey's – so you will continue to keep UNA-UK firmly in your mind every time you open an envelope in future!

On behalf of UNA-UK, thank you for everything you have done over nearly four decades. I wish you every success with the next phase of your life."

Neville Grant Chair of UNA London & South-East Region

"On behalf of UNA London & South-East Region, I would like to say a big thank you to Mike for all he has done over the years to support the region. We shall all miss you Mike! But we hope that we can keep in touch."

Listings



18 October

UNA WESTMINSTER

HRH Prince Turki Al-Faisal will speak on 'New challenges facing the United Nations and its member states' from 6pm in the Moses Room in the House of Lords. Prince Turki formerly served as the ambassador of Saudi Arabia to the UK and to the US. Lord Sheikh will be in the chair. Admission is free but prior registration is required.

Contact: David Wardrop on 020 7385 6738 or info@unawestminster.org.uk

24 October (UN Day)

UNA MID-CORNWALL

At 10am at County Hall, branch members will participate in a UN flag-raising ceremony led by a council representative.

Contact: Barbara Smith on 0172 667 117 or barbara@rabarab.freemove.co.uk; or Joy McMullen on 0172 674 581 or joymcmullen@talktalk.net

UNA SUNDERLAND

The UN Day flag-raising ceremony will take place at 10am outside the Civic Centre in Sunderland.

Contact: Ken Kay on 01913 886 058 or kennethkay@tiscali.co.uk

UNA EXETER

The branch's UN Day flag-raising ceremony will be held at 10.30am at County Hall in Exeter and led by Devon County Councillor Brenda Taylor.

Contact: Noel Harrower on 01395 271 731 or n.harrower@btinternet.com

UNA SHEFFIELD

Members of the branch will be leafleting outside Sheffield Town Hall between 12.30pm and 1.30pm to draw attention to the flying of the UN flag. Would you like to help?

Contact: Elizabeth Coates on 01142 377 583

UNA-UK

The launch of UNA-UK's annual parliamentary lobby on the UN will take place on UN Day from 4.30pm to 6.30pm at the Foreign Press Association.

For more details visit www.una.org.uk or call Mark Rusling on 020 7766 3459.

25 October

UNA CROYDON

To celebrate One World Week, UNA London & South-East Region and Croydon One World are teaming up to hold a community art exhibition at the Hilton Hotel, Croydon (adjacent to East Croydon station). The exhibition will be followed by the Bernard Weatherill Memorial Lecture at 6.30pm. The speaker will be Sir Sigmund Sternberg, British philanthropist and businessman.

Contact: Bruce Robertson on 020 8983 4215 or bruce@prexie.com

27 October

UNA SOUTH LAKELEND & LANCASTER CITY

The branch will be holding a conference to mark One World Week. The event will run from 10.45am to 3.45pm at the United Reformed Church, Highgate, Kendal. The conference will include workshops and talks by Tim Kellow, UNA-UK John Bright Peace & Security Programme Officer, and Maggie Mason, Chair of South Lakeland World Development Movement. Attendance is free. A buffet lunch and refreshments can be provided for £5 but must be booked in advance.

Contact: Luckshan Abeyesuriya on 01539 532 961 or luckyabey@onetel.com

28 October

UNA SUNDERLAND

The branch's UN service will be attended by the mayor and mayoress of Sunderland. It will take place at 10.45am at West Park

United Reformed Church, Sunderland.

Contact: Ken Kay on 01913 886 058 or kennethkay@tiscali.co.uk

30 October

UNA OXFORD

Dr Maung Zarni, a visiting research fellow at the Department of International Development at the University of Oxford, will speak from 12.45pm to 1.40pm at Wesley Memorial Church Hall, New Inn Hall Street, Oxford. The topic of the talk is 'How to promote democracy in other places – what policy towards less free societies?'. Refreshments will be on sale from 12.20pm.

Contact: Margaret Stanton on 01865 515 195

4 November

UNA CLEVELAND

The branch will host an interfaith service at 3pm in the Friends Meeting House, Cambridge Road, Middlesbrough. This will be an opportunity to meet with followers of eight major world faiths and others interested in building good relations among people of different religions. Refreshments will be served after the service.

Contact: Richard Stainsby on 01642 722 589 or richard@gtayton.demon.co.uk; or Irene MacDonald on 01642 722 262 or macdonald.15@virgin.net

UNA MID-CORNWALL

An interfaith service will be held at 3pm at the Chapter House, Truro. There will be readings from representatives of all the major faiths, interspersed with music.

Contact: Barbara Smith on 0172 667 117 or barbara@rabarab.freemove.co.uk; or Joy McMullen on 0172 674 581 or joymcmullen@talktalk.net

5, 12, 19 & 26 November

UNA MERTON

Alison Williams will be conducting a series of workshops on 'Human Security at the UN'. The workshops will run twice a day on the above dates – from 12.30pm to 2.30pm and from 8pm to 10pm – and will be held at 11 Wilberforce House, 119 Worple Road, London SW20.

Contact: Alison Williams on 020 8944 0574 or alisonwilliams36@tiscali.co.uk

6 November

UNA ENFIELD & THE BARNETS

In partnership with the Palmers Green Mosque, the branch is organising a discussion on climate change. Speakers will include representatives from environmental organisations Three Seas and the Islamic Foundation for Ecology and Environment Sciences. The event will begin at 8pm at the Palmers Green Mosque, Oakthorpe Road N13.

Contact: Francis Sealey on 020 8482 4258 or fs@tmdnet.net

10 November

UNA SHEFFIELD

The branch will have a UNA stall at the peace and craft fair at Sheffield Town Hall between 10.30am and 4pm. Please visit to show support.

Contact: Elizabeth Coates on 01142 377 583

UNA LONDON & SE REGION

The region's AGM will be held at 1.30pm at Central Baptist Church, Shaftesbury Avenue (junction with Gower Street). Tony Colman, the outgoing president of the region, will give a speech on 'New Approaches to Peacekeeping'. Natalie Wease, UK youth delegate to the UN, will also speak. The committee is keen for each branch in the region to send a representative. Refreshments will be served but lunch will not be provided.

Contact: Bruce Robertson on 020 8983 4215 or bruce@prexie.com



Image from the film 'Villages on the Front Line: Jordan', to be shown at the We the Peoples film festival. The film was made by IFAD to mark the UN's International Year of Deserts and Desertification. It features innovative uses of land and water that help protect the environment and improve the livelihoods of the poorest farmers.

**WE THE PEOPLES:
SECOND ANNUAL UN FILM FESTIVAL**
29 November to 2 December

Brought to you by the
Westminster branch of UNA-UK

We the Peoples looks to showcase the best documentaries on the UN. This year the spotlight will be on tackling the challenges of the UN Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), a series of eight targets the world has agreed to meet by 2015 in order to reduce poverty and improve health, equality, education and environmental sustainability.

The films to feature in the festival come from across the world and the UK, and include productions by the UN, international development agencies and independent producers.

The main event – comprising five screenings of five films on the MDGs – will be hosted by South Bank's National Film Theatre over the weekend of 1-2 December. Each session will be followed by a Q&A with film producers and field specialists.

Other screenings are planned for different locations around London.

For times, ticket information and further details of the films to be shown, visit the film festival's dedicated website at www.wethepeoples.org.uk

12 November

UNA ENFIELD & THE BARNETS

Karl Ruge, a branch member, will be talking about his life. Born in Germany, Karl was active in the anti-Hitler movement. He subsequently moved to England, joined the British army, and has since been an active figure in local politics. The meeting will take place at 8pm at 7 Park Avenue, London N13 5PG.

Contact: Francis Sealey on 020 8482 4258 or fs@tmdnet.net

13 November

UNA OXFORD

Professor Sir Adam Roberts, Montague Burton Chair of International Relations at the University of Oxford and President of UNA Oxford, will deliver the Evan Luard Memorial Lecture. The title of his speech is 'Guantánamo Bay and All That'. The event will be held from 1pm to 2pm at the Long Room, Oxford Town Hall, St Aldate's.

Contact: Margaret Stanton on 01865 515 195

14 November

UNA WEST OXFORDSHIRE

Former UNA-UK Chair Sir Richard Jolly will speak about progress to

date on the MDGs and the 'hidden successes' of the UN in the economic and development sectors. The event will take place at 8pm at The Cottages, Church Lane, Charlbury, Oxfordshire.

Contact: Malcolm Harper on 01608 810 464 or malcolm.harper@ukonline.co.uk

19 November

UNA SHEFFIELD

Keiko Miyamoto from the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum will give an informal talk from 2pm to 4pm at 10 Dalebrook Court, Sheffield.

Contact: Elizabeth Coates on 01142 377 583

21 November

UNA ENFIELD & THE BARNETS

This branch meeting will focus on human trafficking. Speakers will include representatives from Stop Human Trafficking and Anti-Slavery International. The event will take place from 6.30pm to 9pm in the Wilson Room, Portcullis House, London, and is being hosted by David Burrowes MP. Prior registration is essential.

Contact: Francis Sealey on 020 8482 4258 or fs@tmdnet.net

29 November

UNA MID-CORNWALL

At this branch meeting County Councillor Doris Ansari will give a talk entitled 'A Cornish County Councillor in Russia' at 7pm at the Friends Meeting House, Truro.

Contact: Barbara Smith on 0172 667 117 or barbara@rabarab.freeseerve.co.uk; or Joy McMullen on 0172 674 581 or joymcmullen@talktalk.net

10 December

UNA TUNBRIDGE WELLS

The branch will host a public meeting on children and human rights at 7.30pm in the upstairs room of the Friends Meeting House, Grosvenor Park. A representative from Barnado's Chilton Project in Tunbridge Wells will speak. All are welcome and refreshments will be available.

Contact: Dr Alan Bullion on 01892 549871, 07840 854328 or alan.bullion@informa.com

UNA-UK branches, regions and nations wishing to publicise events in New World should ensure that the information submitted is accurate, clear and complete. Events listings must include the following points of information:

- Title/purpose of the event
- Start and end times
- Venue details
- Contact point (full name, telephone number, e-mail address and, where applicable, web address)

Events listings should be sent to membership@una.org.uk or UNA-UK, 3 Whitehall Court, London SW1A 2EL.

UNA-UK takes no responsibility for the events and/or campaigns organised by UNA-UK branches, regions or nations.

What else is going on?

JUBILEE DEBT CAMPAIGN

14-20 October is Global Debt Week. Jubilee Debt Campaign will be asking supporters to take part in a variety of events, such as 'Lift the Lid' lobby day on 19 October, to highlight the problem of unpayable and unfair debts in the run-up to the annual meetings of the World Bank and IMF.

For more information, please visit www.jubileedebtcampaign.org.uk

GLOBAL DEVELOPMENT FORUM

In October the Global Development Forum will be hosting a series of debates: 17 October: 'Relief versus Development'; 24 October: 'Europe needs its own policy on the UN separate from the US'; 30 October: 'Global warming: is it too late to save the poorest of the world?' Speakers will include Lord Malloch-Brown, Minister for Africa, Asia and the UN; Peter Ritchie from Chatham House; and Professor Paul Collier from the Oxford University Centre for the Study of African Economies. The events will take place at 7pm at St James's Church, Piccadilly, London W1. Tickets are £8 and should be booked in advance. A limited number of tickets can be bought for £5 on the door but availability cannot be guaranteed.

For further information and to book, please visit www.global-development-forum.org or contact Benny Dembitzer on director@global-development-forum.org

REFUGEE COUNCIL

In this 'Guluwalk' on 20 October participants will walk for 6 miles around Birmingham to raise

awareness of the daily trek that the children of North Uganda have to make to avoid abduction or death in conflict. The walk will begin at 1pm at Aston University, and will finish at the Safari Bar and Restaurant, 256 Great Lister Street, Birmingham B7 4DA.

For further details, visit www.refugeecouncil.org.uk or contact Rachel Toussaint on 01213 333 208 or masai@safaribar.co.uk

ONE WORLD WEEK

21-28 is One World Week (OWW), an annual chance for people to take action in support of global justice. Everyone is welcome to take part. You can organise events independently or with local OWW contacts. Visit www.oneworldweek.org to find out about local OWW events planned in your area.

For further details, please e-mail one_world_week@hotmail.com or visit www.oneworldweek.org

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL UK

'Tsotsi' is an Oscar-winning film depicting the life of a young Johannesburg gang leader and the responsibilities he faces as he tries to care for a baby. The screening, on 23 October, will begin at 6.30pm at the Amnesty Human Rights Action Centre, 17-25 New Inn Yard, London EC2A 3EA. There will be a Q&A session afterwards. Entrance is free but booking is essential. The film is rated Cert 15; proof of age may be requested.

For further information and to book, please visit www.amnesty.org.uk/events

WORLD DISARMAMENT CAMPAIGN

On 29 October, the World Disarmament Campaign will hold its annual conference. The conference will cover global security, new superpowers and climate change. Speakers include Glyn Ford, MEP; John Gittings, former chief foreign leader-writer for the *Guardian*; and Dan Smith, Secretary General of

International Alert. The conference is taking place in committee room 4 in the House of Lords and will begin at 2pm. Registration is essential as capacity is limited.

To register and for further information, please write to Frank Jackson, 11 Kingsmoor Road, Harlow, Essex CM19 4HP or e-mail him at editor.worlddisarm@ntworld.com

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL UK

Clive Stafford Smith, a renowned human rights lawyer, will deliver this year's Amnesty Lecture. The lecture, to be held at 6.30pm on 2 November, will be based on his book *Bad Men: Guantánamo Bay and the Secret Prisons*. The event will be held at Elmwood Hall, University Road, Belfast. Tickets cost £10.

For further information, please visit www.amnesty.org.uk/events

WOMEN'S INTERNATIONAL LEAGUE FOR PEACE AND FREEDOM (WILPF) (UK)

On 3 November WILPF UK will hold a seminar entitled 'The environmental consequences of war and corporate power – a woman's perspective'. The event will take place from 10am to 5pm at Essex Hall, Essex Street, London. Speakers will include Edel Havin Beukes of WILPF and Kate Hudson, Chair of the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament. The seminar will feature workshops on a variety of subjects, including nuclear power, the Women's Manifesto on Climate Change and the environmental implications of the arms trade. Drinks and light refreshments will be available, as will a vegetarian lunch for £4.50. The entrance fee is £5 (£3 concession). Booking in advance is advised.

For further details, visit www.ukwilpf.org.uk

UNIFEM UK

On 6 November UNIFEM UK is holding a conference on 'Women and Work'. The event will run from 6pm to 8.30pm at

Linklaters, 1 Silk Street, London. Guest speakers will include Lord Brett of the International Labour Organization and Deborah Foy, Programme Development Manager of Opportunity International UK. The registration fee is £15 (£10 for UNIFEM members) and refreshments will be provided.

To register, please send a cheque made out to 'UNIFEM UK' with your name and contact details to UNIFEM UK, Southlands College (Room QB149A), Roehampton University, Roehampton Lane, London SW15 5PU. For further details, please visit www.unifemuk.org/events

MOVEMENT FOR THE ABOLITION OF WAR (MAW)

On 11 November Helena Kennedy QC will give a talk entitled 'Law not War'. The talk will begin at 2pm at the Imperial War Museum, Lambeth Road, London. The event is free but prior booking is advised.

For tickets, please write to brucek@uk2.net or MAW, 11 Venetia Road, London N4 1EJ.

LONDON SCHOOL OF ECONOMICS

At 6.30pm on 15 November Lord Malloch-Brown, Minister for Africa, Asia and the UN and former Deputy Secretary-General of the United Nations, will give a lecture. The event will be held at the Old Theatre, LSE, Houghton Street, London. The event is free and open to all but it is necessary to book a ticket.

For further information and ticket booking, please visit www.lse.ac.uk/collections/LSEpubliclecturesandevents or e-mail events@lse.ac.uk

WOMEN'S ADVISORY COUNCIL OF UNA-UK

WAC's AGM is being held on 5 December from 2pm to 4pm at County Hall Westminster. Speakers to be confirmed.

Contact: Suzanne Long on 020 7328 5365 or sdlong@tiscali.co.uk

UNA-UK's Extraordinary General Meeting on 27 November 2007



The UNA-UK Board of Directors established an effectiveness review panel just over a year ago. I am most grateful to Thelma de Leeuw, who chaired the panel, and to the other panel members, for their valuable contributions to this process. The review produced a series of recommendations aimed at improving the work of the Board and the governance of UNA-UK. The Board implemented those decisions it could take under its own authority, such as making public the minutes of its meetings. Others required wider consultation, such as the proposal to reduce the size of the Board while retaining its representative nature. These

latter proposals were discussed at a special informal session in the margins of Annual Conference, and received widespread support there. The Board has subsequently made some modifications to the proposals following those and further consultations, and is putting these proposals to an EGM on 27 November 2007, so that, if agreed at that meeting, they can take effect prior to the start of the 2007-08 cycle of elections.

Full details of the proposals can be found in the EGM notice inserted in this issue of *New World*. The notice contains two Special Resolutions. The first would amend the company's Articles of Association to provide for proxy voting, a legal requirement of the Companies Act 2006. The second would alter the composition of the Board of Directors, as well as the term limits and terms of office of Directors, in line with the recommendations en-

dorsed by the Board. If these recommendations are passed, UNA-UK will review the subsequent operation of the Board no later than five years from the date of the EGM, to determine whether any adjustments or further changes are desirable.

I hope that as many of you as possible will attend the EGM in London on 27 November, or will send in your proxy votes if you cannot attend, and thus contribute to what I believe are important steps to improve the working of UNA-UK. I am convinced myself that they will make a real difference, and for the better.

Lord Hannay of Chiswick

British Association of Former United Nations Civil Servants (BAFUNCS)

Are you a former UN employee?
Then join BAFUNCS!

BAFUNCS provides a means of keeping in touch with your former colleagues and enjoying the fellowship of others who worked in the UN system. In addition to organising social events, BAFUNCS keeps a brief on UN pension

and staff health insurance matters, and advises on general and individual welfare support questions. All BAFUNCS members receive a newsletter in March and September.


Even if you have not worked for the United Nations, but support its ideals, you can become an Associate Member.

Serving United Nations system staff may also join.

For more information write to BAFUNCS, 6 The Lawn, Ealing Green London W5 5ER, or e-mail bafuncs@globalnet.co.uk

<http://bafuncs.imo.org>

Flag Day 2007-08



Over the last year, UNA-UK members raised a remarkable £12,861 for UNICEF as part of the joint UNICEF/UNA Trust Flag Day appeal.

This money has made a real difference to the lives of some of the world's poorest children. In addition, members and branches have raised more than £30,000 during the last 12 months to support the work of the UNA Trust – educating about the United Nations and contributing to the work of UNA-UK and various UN agencies.

With your help we can raise even more money this year! A number of branches have started using the new materials available from UNA-UK head office. We have new sashes, stickers, collec-

tion tin wrappers (and of course tins!), information leaflets and official collection receipt cards. An order form has been sent to all branch secretaries.

Nick Branson, a volunteer at UNA-UK head office, is available on Wednesdays and Fridays for the next six months if you have any questions about the materials available.

Nick can be reached on 020 7766 3448 or branson@una.org.uk However, if you are from a branch in London and South-East region you should instead contact Peter Webster, the regional treasurer. He can be reached at 30 Culverhouse Gardens, London SW16 2TX, webster.home@btinternet.com or 020 8769 5095.

UNA-UK Annual Conference 2008



This year's Annual Conference will take place at Exeter University on 28-30 March 2008. Every member of UNA-UK is encouraged to attend and take part in our policy-making process. It should be a fun and informative event, with free UN resources, films and a high-level speaker.

Policy formulation

Following the successful trial of new procedures at Annual Conference 2007 at Warwick University, the Procedure Committee is again asking branches, regions, affiliates, and the UNA-UK Board to submit, instead of formal motions, up to five 'policy issues' of no more than 150 words. Policy issues can contain the same substance as traditional motions – e.g. specifics of what UNA-UK would like the UK government to undertake in relation to an aspect of the UN's work – or they can express a more general concern about a topical issue – e.g. a civil war in a specific country.

Example of a policy issue submission: Our branch commends the efforts of Ibrahim Gambari, the UN special envoy to Burma, to broker an agreement between the government and opposition in that country. We urge the British government to put pressure on the authorities in that country to cooperate with a UN-led reconciliation and democratisation process.

Domestic Motions

Domestic motions, which concern the work of UNA-UK rather than its public

policy positions, should also be no more than 150 words. In order to be admissible, those motions carrying financial implications for UNA-UK must be accompanied by a schedule indicating how the proposals will be funded.

Booking

Use the form enclosed with this New World to register for the conference. Book before 31 January 2008 to avoid the 10 per cent late booking fee.

Elections to the UNA-UK Board and the UNA Trust

Have you thought of standing for election to the UNA-UK Board of Directors or to the UNA Trust? Now is your chance! Each year members are elected to serve as directors of the UNA-UK Board, and one member is elected a trustee of the UNA Trust.

Please note that those elected assume the legal responsibilities and potential financial liabilities that arise from taking on these positions.

UNA-UK seeks continuous improvements to its governance practices. UNA-UK members with experience on other boards and trusts are therefore encouraged to apply.

Nomination forms can be downloaded from the UNA-UK website or requested from Natalie Samarasinghe by e-mail on samarasinghe@una.org.uk or by telephone on 020 7766 3457.

Completed nomination forms must be

Timetable

1 December 2007:

- DEADLINE for submission of policy issues and domestic motions for Annual Conference 2008 by branches, regions, affiliates, the UNA-UK Board, and groups of six members
- DEADLINE for submission of nomination forms for elections to the UNA-UK Board of Directors and the UNA Trust

14 December 2007

- Meeting of the Procedure Committee to process submissions, followed by the compiling of submissions by UNA-UK staff into a draft policy document and a draft domestic motions document

25 January 2008

- Annual Conference 2008 preliminary agenda to be sent out (to include the draft policy and domestic motions documents and request for comments/amendments)

2 February 2008

- Meeting of the UNA-UK Board of Directors

18 February 2008

- Deadline for submission of comments/amendments (to be no more than 150 words)

22 February 2008

- Meeting of the Procedure Committee

14 March 2008

- Annual Conference 2008 final agenda to be sent out

28-30 March 2008

- Annual Conference 2008 at Exeter University

returned to the Executive Director at UNA-UK's offices no later than 1 December 2007.

Ballot papers will be sent out with the January-March 2008 issue of New World. The names of the directors and the trustee subsequently elected will be announced at the UNA-UK AGM on 28 March 2008, and they will begin their terms of office from that date.

Expanding numbers and horizons point to a busy year ahead



Tim Kellow

Over the relatively quiet (and rainy!) summer months, the YPN Steering Committee has been busy planning the network's programme for the coming year. Building on the success of our work around sustainable development, we will be launching new projects in the network's other two main areas of interest – peace and justice.

But it is not just our activities that are expanding: the network's membership has also grown significantly in 2007, from 900 in January to around 1,400 in September. We have been approached by a number of interesting organisations which are keen to collaborate with us.

The YPN website will be evolving over the next few months to include more information about our work – and that of the UN – in peace, justice and sustainable development, as well as careers resources and details of upcoming events. We will also be creating an online 'members' corner' for posting articles by YPN members. If you are interested in writing an article for the YPN website, or if you have any questions, comments or suggestions, then write to me at yjn@una.org.uk

YPN launches 'Working for Peace' initiative with exclusive screening of Darfur film

On the evening of 24 October, UN Day, the YPN will be holding the first event in its new strand of activities entitled 'Working for Peace': a screening of the award-winning 'The Devil Came on Horseback'.

Through speaker events, film screenings and online resources, the Working for Peace initiative seeks to foster a wider understanding of the realities and complexities of living and working in a conflict-affected country.

Over the next few months, YPN will also be taking forward the Working for Peace blog mentioned in the July-September 2007 issue of New World, initially through links to existing blogs by individuals living and working in conflict zones.

'The Devil Came on Horseback' is a powerful account of the tragedy in Darfur, documented through the photographs and first-hand testimony of an official military observer, former US

Marine Captain Brian Steidle. Unprepared for the scenes he encountered and frustrated by the international community's inaction, Steidle resigned from his post as a monitor of the Darfur Peace Agreement and returned to the US to raise awareness about the situation in the fraught Sudanese region.

The screening will be followed by a discussion with one of the film's makers and a leading campaigner on Darfur. The event will take place at the Frontline Club in central London.

To find out more about the film and to register to attend this screening, visit the YPN website at www.una.org.uk/yjn

The Devil Came on Horseback – a Break Thru Films production in association with Global Grassroots and Three Generations – is a film by Annie Sundberg and Ricki Stern.



Left: Brian Steidle with refugee children in Chad. Photo © Gretchen Steidle Wallace
Right: The village of Um Zeifa, Darfur. Photo © Leo Buurman



YPN

Young Professionals Network



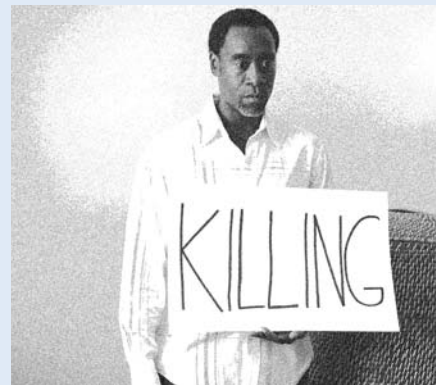
YOUNG PROFESSIONALS NETWORK
of UNA-UK



Elle Macpherson



Matt Damon



Don Cheadle

Photos © Crisis Action

Young professionals take action on Darfur – and the government listens!

On 16 September, YPN members took part in a rally calling on the UK government to take the lead in pushing for the rapid deployment of a UN peacekeeping force to the Darfur region of Sudan.

The event was one of many held around the world to mark the Day for Darfur – a day of action to bring attention to the ongoing conflict, which has killed over 200,000 people and displaced at least two million. The day of action, the fourth of its kind, was organised by Globe for Darfur, an international coalition of NGOs of which UNA-UK is a member, formed in response to the weak international approach to the crisis.

The central message of the day, which was marked in over 30 countries worldwide, was 'don't look away now'. Participants wore blindfolds to tell world leaders not to turn a

blind eye to the atrocities as they convened at the UN in New York for the annual high-level segment of the General Assembly.

To mark the day in the UK, a rally of around 1,200 people began outside the Sudanese embassy before moving on to Downing Street. Several high-profile speakers addressed the rally, among them Lord Malloch-Brown, Minister for Africa, Asia and the UN; Andrew Mitchell MP, Shadow International Development Secretary; and several Darfuri survivors.

Lord Malloch-Brown applauded the crowd's efforts, saying:

"So while it seems difficult to come out every year to these demonstrations, it's really important that you do it. And I say that not just as a British Foreign Office minister, but as someone who was previously Kofi



Desmond Tutu

Annan's deputy at the United Nations. All our efforts on Darfur need public support. We need to be able to say that people are turning out in London, in Washington, in Paris, in Johannesburg, all over the world, to protest what is happening in Darfur."

The Day for Darfur attracted significant celebrity support, with high-profile actors and musicians lending their names to the initiative. 'Living Darfur', a single by music group Mattafix, was released to coincide with the day. Its video, filmed in IDP camps on the Chad-Darfur border, can be accessed via www.una.org.uk/protectdarfur.html. Here you will also find a host of other resources, including a letter of advice from Senator Romeo Dallaire to the new AU force commander in Darfur.



Photos © UNA-UK/Tim Kellow



Left: FCO Minister Lord Malloch-Brown addresses the rally.

Right: Crowd calls on the world to fulfil its responsibility to protect.

To join the network and keep informed about its activities, sign up at www.una.org.uk/ypn and you will receive our monthly YPN newsletter.

Welcome from the President



Luke Harman

I hope all UNYSA members have enjoyed the summer. I would like to send particularly warm greetings to the new branches at King's College London and Aberystwyth, Durham, Nottingham, Queen's University Belfast, and London South Bank universities.

As President of UNYSA's Youth Council this year, I wanted to update you on some of our plans for 2007-08. One exciting example is the MDG Challenge, which will be open to all UK university students. We will be asking teams of students to research and develop proposals

on what the UK government should do to achieve a specific Millennium Development Goal. The proposals will be judged by an expert panel, and the winning teams will be recognised at a prestigious event in spring 2008.

Details of all of our upcoming initiatives will be posted on the website: www.una.org.uk/youth

Best wishes for a successful year!

Model UN, Ghana-style

This summer UNA-UK invited applications from UNYSA members for a six-week volunteer opportunity in Ghana, the purpose of the placement being to help local NGO Life-Link prepare for its major annual Model UN conference on UN Day. In July, the successful applicant, Avnish Raichura, travelled to Ghana with UNA-UK Campaigns & Education Officer Mark Rusling. Avnish stayed for six weeks in Tema, a town located 30 miles from the capital, Accra. There, he helped train the junior high school students who were to be delegates in the conference, teaching them all there is to know about Model UN. Here he describes his work in Ghana.

My excitement was beyond control when Mark called and said: "So, how would you like to spend this summer in Ghana?" I had been selected by UNA-UK to travel to the country to teach students aged 11-15 about the UN system and to train them to take part in a junior high school Model UN conference.

Life-Link Ghana is the excellent organisation responsible for this Model UN event; its primary objective is to educate children about global issues, with a particular emphasis on the UN. But Life-Link also aims to use Model UN to impart key transferable skills to participants. That is why Life-Link Director Ernest Gyimah Danquah – an IT expert – asked me to plan lessons that would combine teaching

about international affairs with the opportunity to learn and develop computer skills. Provided with a fully equipped training room, I was instructed to organise five weeks of lessons, teaching 135 students each week.

I started by introducing students to typing General Assembly resolutions. There was a real range of experience with computers: a few students were well-versed in Microsoft Word, whereas others had never touched a keyboard. We moved on to using the internet to research countries and then presenting the findings to the rest of the class. Improving the students' public speaking abilities was another objective – after using their IT know-how to research one of the UN's principal organs, they were



UNYSA

United Nations Youth and Student Association



then asked to give a PowerPoint presentation about the body's functions and purposes.

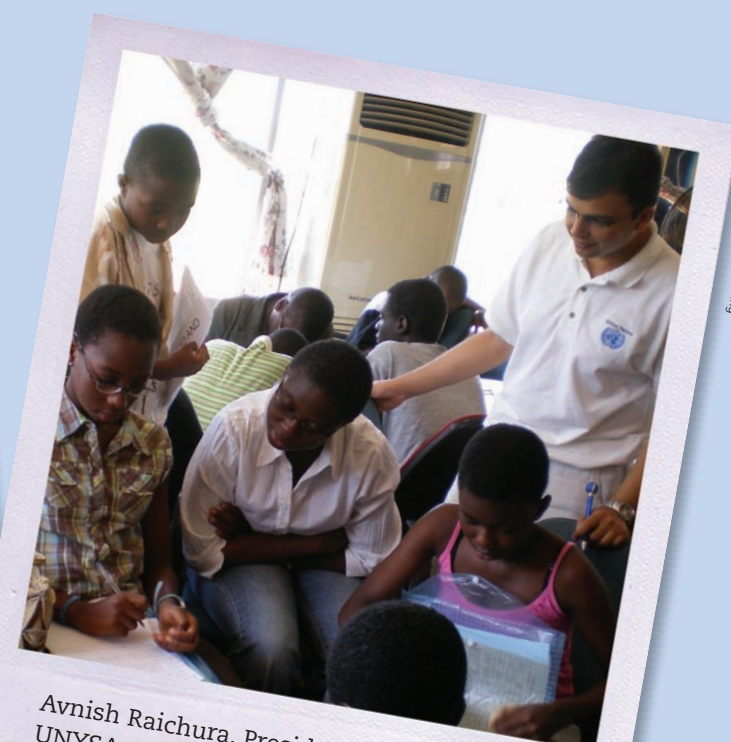
The theme of the Model UN conference was the Millennium Development Goals. The MDGs were introduced in an informal setting so that students learned the skill of unmoderated caucusing. After four weeks of teaching, I set the students a test covering all aspects of the programme. To my great pleasure, all the students performed excep-

tionally, with an average pass mark of 87 per cent!

I was inspired by the enthusiasm and commitment of the students in Ghana. I have come away from that experience a firm believer in Model UN as a life-changing activity and an effective learning tool. It encourages students to consider other viewpoints before forming opinions; it teaches them that disputes are better solved with words than with weapons.

For helping to make my stay in Ghana so stimulating, and for their extraordinary hospitality, I would like to thank Ernest Gyimah Danquah, Gerald Adu Yaw Appau, and everyone at Life-Link Ghana.

If you would like to know more about Life-Link's work, visit www.lifelinkghana.com or e-mail Mark Rusling on rusling@una.org.uk



Avnish Raichura, President of Leeds UNYSA, working with Model UN students in Tema, Ghana

Photos © UNA-UK/Mark Rusling



Top tip from Mark Rusling, UNA-UK Campaigns & Education Officer

Part of my job is to try to ensure that, once a UNYSA branch is set up, it does not fall apart when the members of its committee graduate from university.

You can help me by setting up a dedicated e-mail account for your UNYSA and passing it on to your successor committee when you leave uni. Many branches already do this – it means that,

when you move on and your university e-mail account expires, we can still keep in touch with the UNYSA!

So if you haven't set up a dedicated e-mail account, I urge you to do so. If you have, then make sure I know about it. You can e-mail me on rusling@una.org.uk

Thanks!

**UNYSA
representatives
share their plans
for freshers fairs**



Cambridge University
Brittany Krupica, President

During freshers week we will be handing out loads of information about the UN and CUUNA, and those who join at the fair will get a copy of New World. In October a social event will be held to welcome new and existing members, and on UN Day we are

pleased to welcome Sir Brian Heap as a guest speaker. We will also be advertising our much anticipated CUUNA Study Tour to Geneva in April 2008.



Oxford University **Dex Torricke-Barton, Chair**

We are hosting our inaugural Robin Cook Memorial Debate on 10 October. Our speakers will be Lord Malloch-Brown, Minister for Africa, Asia and the UN; John Horam MP; and Baroness Tonge. We will also be holding an 'Introduction to Model UN' event, and a drinks social at the famous QI Bar.



Leeds University **Stefanie Zammit, Vice-President**

We will be around campus all freshers week handing out UNA-UK goodies and releasing UNYSA helium balloons with messages of peace. (We will be taking steps to limit the impact of the balloons on the environment – at Leeds UNYSA, we believe in having fun with a conscience!)



Leicester University **Chris Levick, Vice-Chair**

Last year we were voted 'best newcomer student group' by the students' union. This year we want to build on this success and hope to attract new members during freshers week with our UN club night – maybe we'll call it 'Boogie with Ban'!



Warwick University
Stoil Topalov, President

For our first freshers fair, we want to create a good impression. We have already put posters and UN flags all around campus and we are hoping to secure exclusive use of one of the university bars for UN-themed drinks and dancing for our members!

The UN Youth and Student Association (UNYSA) is the youth wing of UNA-UK, with societies and groups at universities and schools around the country.

Would you like to join UNYSA or set up a UNYSA group at your school or university?

Visit www.una.org.uk/youth for more information

JOIN UNA-UK TODAY!

UNITED NATIONS ASSOCIATION OF THE UK, 3 Whitehall Court, London SW1A 2EL • Tel: 020 7766 3456 • Fax: 020 7930 5893

Membership costs £25 (£12 unwaged) per year or £35 (£14 unwaged) for two people at one address. For students and young people (under 26), the cost is £6 per year.

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Address: _____

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Please feel free to photocopy this form if you do not want to cut it out of the magazine. You can also join online at www.una.org.uk

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UNA Trust is an independent charity, registered in England (charity number 256236), which traditionally supports the educational work of UNA-UK. By supporting the UNA Trust, you will help UNA-UK raise awareness about the vital work of the United Nations, building public support in the UK for sustainable development, environmental protection, gender equality, human rights, the peaceful resolution of conflict, and the maintenance of international law.

STAND UP
to bring poverty down!

SPEAK OUT
for the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals

STAND UP
against injustice and inequality

SPEAK OUT
to demand that our government's promises are kept

STAND UP and be counted!

SPEAK OUT and be heard!



STAND UP

SPEAK OUT

AGAINST POVERTY AND INEQUALITY



see www.una.org.uk for further details



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