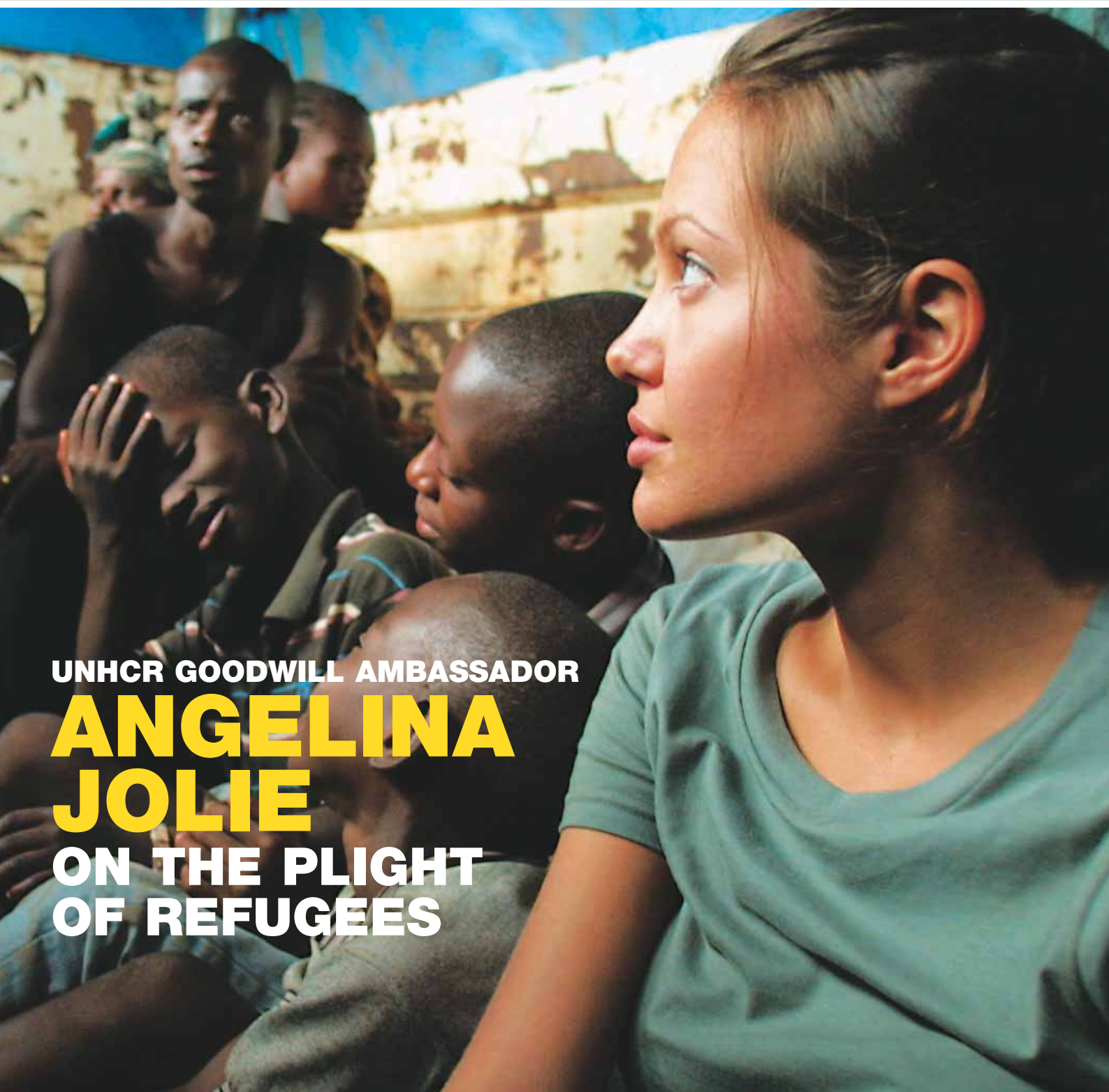




NEW WORLD

News and comment on the United Nations and UNA

April-June 2006



UNHCR GOODWILL AMBASSADOR

**ANGELINA
JOLIE**

**ON THE PLIGHT
OF REFUGEES**



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Cover photo:
UNHCR Goodwill Ambassador
Angelina Jolie inside a convoy truck
with Congolese refugees just arriving in
Tanzania. In recent years the country has
been hosting nearly one million victims of
persecution and war.
Photo © UNHCR/N. Behring-Chisholm

Detailed information on Ms Jolie's work
can be found at her website at
www.unhcr.org/goodwill

The deadline for submission of material for the next issue of *New World* is noon on
Monday, 5 June 2006. The next issue will cover the period 1 July to 30 September
2006. Please send all contributions, by e-mail where possible, to lie@una.org.uk.
Digital photos should be at least 300 dpi resolution.



FROM EXECUTIVE

Welcome to the
spring 2006 issue of
New World. This is
an exciting time for
both UNA-UK
and the UN, a time of dynamic change
and growth. This issue reproduces Kofi
Annan's powerful January speech to
UNA-UK in London, in which he gave
a personal and candid appraisal of
progress on UN renewal, and on his own
term of office. He also used his speech
to thank UNA-UK and the FCO for
our innovative joint national consulta-
tions on his *In Larger Freedom* report
over the course of the last year.

UNA-UK is most grateful to the
FCO for its funding of the Annan
event, to the Foreign Secretary for intro-
ducing the Secretary-General, and to
Central Hall Westminster for providing
the historic venue. Tim Morris and his
staff in the FCO International
Organisations Department provided
invaluable direct support. This UN60
event, broadcast to millions around the
world via a live UN webcast and
through pooled television cameras,
raised UNA-UK's profile both national-
ly and internationally. UKMUN ran an
excellent historic Security Council on

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SAM DAWS

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

the day of the event. I would like to express appreciation to the UNA staff and dedicated volunteers who organised this major event at very short notice and with such professionalism. I would like in particular to acknowledge Matt Ripley, the event coordinator. For more photos and to watch the webcast, go to www.una.org.uk

UNA-UK members have given considerable support to UN humanitarian agencies, both financially and through advocacy work. In the lead-up to World Refugee Day this *New World* features the work of UNHCR Goodwill Ambassador Angelina Jolie. It also provides details of the World Food Programme's Walk the World event on 21 May, which seeks to raise awareness about child hunger.

Both our youth and student wing, UNYSA, and our new Young Professionals Network (YPN) are flourishing. The 19 January YPN launch, held in Parliament, is featured on pages 40 and 41.

Kofi Annan's term of office ends on 31 December of this year, and the search for a new UN Secretary-General is now under way. See page 14. Many of the challenges this person will face, from Iran and Darfur to the advancement of women, are also addressed in this issue.

We will be including in the autumn issue of *New World* registration details for a major UNA-UK conference, to be held in Cardiff on 2 December 2006 in partnership with UNA Wales and the David Davies Memorial Institute, on the issue of nuclear proliferation and the replacement of Trident. All members are welcome.

The Cardiff conference will build upon and complement UNA's continu-

ing specialised advocacy work, which has included an expert seminar on the future of the human rights treaty body system at Lancaster House, and a meeting with Ambassador Tahir-Kheli, Condoleezza Rice's senior adviser on UN reform. See pages 36 and 39.

Included in this issue is an informative article on debt written by Trisha Rogers of the Jubilee Debt Campaign, one of our key partners in campaigning for the fulfilment of MDG 8 and the lead organisation for debt campaigning following the end of the **MAKEPOVERTYHISTORY** coalition after 2005.

“ Throughout UNA branches and regions there is a warm admiration and appreciation for all that Sir Richard has done for UNA and for the values he embodies ”

Progress towards placing UNA-UK on a more solid financial footing continues apace. I am delighted to announce that the UNA Trust has been awarded a £400,000 charitable trust grant, spread over three years, in support of the continuing renewal of UNA-UK. This generous grant has been made in memory of John Ferguson, a former national chair of UNA-UK. The grant provides a valuable foundation on which to base future fundraising as we seek to expand UNA-UK's educational and campaigning work over the coming years.

In January 2006 Sir Richard Jolly completed his five-year term as Chair

of UNA-UK. In the autumn of 2005 the Board undertook a search for a new Chair, and at its meeting on 28 January unanimously appointed Lord Hannay of Chiswick for an initial one-year appointment, in accordance with UNA's Articles of Association. An article by David Hannay can be found on page 16. He brings with him formidable experience of the United Nations and of government policy formulation, and has already demonstrated that he will be a powerful advocate on behalf of UNA-UK, having led our successful lobbying of the government in support of the new Human Rights Council.

UNA-UK owes a great debt of gratitude to Sir Richard Jolly. On page 14 you will find a tribute to him by Vice-Chair Rod Fielding. I am personally most grateful to Richard for the steadfast support that he has given me since I took over as Executive Director 18 months ago, tasked with implementing UNA-UK's renewal process. Throughout UNA branches and regions there is a warm admiration and appreciation for all that Sir Richard has done for UNA and for the values he embodies. Of particular inspiration has been his promotion of the UN's work in development – especially vital issues such as the empowerment of women and access to clean water for the poor. There will be an opportunity for us formally to express our appreciation for Richard's contribution at Annual Conference 2006.

I look forward to seeing as many of you as possible at Annual Conference in Durham. Even if you can't attend conference, you and friends may wish to hear Shashi Tharoor speak in Durham Cathedral on 22 April. See page 4.

We hope that UNA's redesigned website will provide more resources to enable individual members and branches to campaign on key UNA concerns. Please visit www.una.org.uk and give us your feedback!



A Message from the Prime Minister to UNA-UK Annual Conference 2006



10 DOWNING STREET
LONDON SW1A 2AA

It gives me great pleasure to send you a message for your Annual Conference.

Let me first express my appreciation for all the hard work of UNA-UK in support of the UN.

I was pleased that the Government and UNA-UK were able to work together so closely over the past year. This began with the public debates on the Secretary-General's 'In Larger Freedom' Report, which gave us the opportunity to hear directly the views of UNA members, other civil society organisations and the general public. This was extremely valuable as we shaped our approach to last September's 2005 World Summit.

Our collaboration continued with the events to mark the 60th Anniversary of the United Nations. These included a reception hosted by the Foreign Secretary to commemorate the signature of the UN Charter, and the Methodist Central Hall event with Kofi Annan to remember the first UN General Assembly and Security Council meetings. Both events underlined the Government's strong support for an effective and efficient United Nations at the centre of the multilateral system.

At Central Hall, Kofi Annan outlined his view that only global solutions would solve global problems, whether they be poverty, nuclear proliferation, climate change, terrorism, HIV/AIDS, human trafficking or genocide. I fully agree with him. The UN remains the primary mechanism for tackling the inter-related challenges of development, security and human rights.

Last September's World Summit was an important step forward for the UN. It delivered an essential package of reforms and commitments. The agreements on development and climate change reflected several important Gleneagles and EU commitments. These included the need to accelerate progress towards the Millennium Development Goals and to address the special needs of Africa. The endorsement of the Responsibility to Protect concept – the first time that the international community has agreed collectively to protect vulnerable populations from genocide, war crimes, crimes against humanity and ethnic cleansing – was an important advance.

In other areas, the challenge ahead is implementation. The agreement to establish the Peacebuilding Commission will close an institutional gap in the UN's conflict architecture and will assist countries emerging from conflict. We now need to make it work. I very much welcome the agreement to establish a new Human Rights Council, to replace the ineffective Commission on Human Rights. The negotiations to establish the Council have been difficult. But the key now is to ensure we will have an effective UN body, able to uphold and protect our universal human rights.

Another key challenge this year is management reform. I support Kofi Annan's efforts to ensure the United Nations is better managed. We will work with other Member States to implement his proposals.

I also believe that Kofi Annan's new System-wide Coherence Panel – on which Gordon Brown will participate – has potential to make a real difference to the UN's development work on the ground. We want the panel to be ambitious when it reports later this year.

If fully implemented, the reforms agreed at the World Summit will result in a UN better equipped to address the huge challenges the world faces today – be they in Africa, Iraq or Afghanistan; or on terrorism, disaster relief, poverty, HIV/AIDS or climate change.

I wish you every success at the Conference, and in your 61st year.

Tony Blair

April 2006

Saturday, 22 April 2006: Shashi Tharoor to Address UNA-UK at Annual Conference

We would like to confirm that the keynote speech at UNA-UK Annual Conference by Shashi Tharoor, United Nations Under-Secretary-General for Communications and Public Information, will take place on Saturday, 22 April 2006 at 6.15pm in Durham Cathedral.

Coaches will ferry participants from the Conference's main venue to Durham Cathedral, and will take attendees back to the university following the speech. UNA-UK members attending Annual Conference are guaranteed a place for Dr Tharoor's talk. Anyone not attending Annual Conference is also most welcome to attend the lecture, but they must register in advance by contacting Matt Ripley on events@una.org.uk or 020 7766 3459.





Developments at the United Nations

Peacebuilding Commission

The UN's new Peacebuilding Commission – formally established by the General Assembly (GA) and Security Council in December last year – is intended to marshal resources and offer advice on post-conflict recovery. The Commission will bring together UN capacities in conflict prevention, mediation, peacekeeping, human rights, rule of law, humanitarian aid, reconstruction and long-term development. The Commission will seek to bridge the gap between short-term peacekeeping and longer-term sustainable development.

The Commission's Organisational Committee will comprise 31 member states: a) seven from the Security Council, including the permanent five; b) seven from ECOSOC; c) five of the top 10 financial contributors to the UN budgets; d) five out of the top 10 contributors of personnel to UN missions; e) seven extra members, elected by the GA based on geographical balance and post-conflict experience. Membership of country-specific committees will be tailored for each case – involving country representatives, regional organisations and international financial institutions.

General Assembly creates new Human Rights Council

On 15 March this year, the General Assembly agreed to establish a new Human Rights Council. Key features of the Council that differ from the previous Commission on Human Rights are that: the Council will comprise 47 members, as opposed to 53; Council members will be elected by the GA (on 9 May) by a simple majority (96 votes); prospective candidates' human rights contributions will be considered; and elected members must commit to the highest human rights standards. Prospective candidates will need to make assurances to protect human rights, while a Council member can be suspended if the GA decides by a two-thirds majority that it has grossly violated human rights. The Council will meet at least three times a year for a minimum of ten weeks, can convene to address urgent situations, and can hold special sessions; the Commission met in one annual six-

week session. The Council will conduct a universal periodic review of each UN member state's fulfilment of its human rights obligations. The first meeting of the Council will be on 19 June 2006.

A few states – notably the US – believe that the new Council should have a smaller membership, stricter criteria barring countries with poor human rights records and tougher electoral procedures. However, most states – and also UNA-UK – consider the Council an improvement upon the past, and an instrument which can be further improved in future.

Mark Malloch Brown appointed Deputy Secretary-General

On 3 February 2006, Kofi Annan announced the appointment of Mark Malloch Brown of the UK as his Deputy Secretary-General, to replace Louise Fréchette. Malloch Brown was Annan's *Chef de Cabinet* from January 2005. Prior to this, he ran the UN Development Programme (UNDP) and chaired the UN Development Group – comprising the heads of all UN development-related funds, programmes and departments. Malloch Brown oversaw a comprehensive reform of UNDP which was acknowledged to have greatly improved the body's focus and effectiveness across its 166 country programmes. Malloch Brown served at the World Bank as Vice-President for External Affairs and for UN Affairs from 1996 to 1999, where he is credited with having enhanced outreach and expanded partnerships with the UN and NGOs. In 1997, he chaired the UN Secretary-General's task force on reforming UN communications. Malloch Brown's experience and achievements have earned him a reputation as a highly effective reformer.

Kofi Annan presents management reform proposals

On 7 March, the Secretary-General presented to member states his proposals for a fundamental overhaul of the UN Secretariat. Key components of Kofi Annan's recommendations relate to: 1) people, notably that staff must serve in a

variety of posts to be considered for promotion; 2) leadership, including a redefinition of the role of the Deputy Secretary-General, delegating to him or her formal responsibility for managing the functions of the Secretariat; and 3) service delivery, with consideration given to relocation and outsourcing. Other areas for reform include information and communications technology, budget and finance, and governance.

On 30 December 2005, an Ethics Office was established within the Secretariat to assist in ensuring that all UN staff operate consistently with the highest standards of integrity, through fostering a culture of ethics, transparency and accountability.

High-level Panel on UN System-wide Coherence

The Secretary-General announced on 16 February 2006 the formation of a new high-level panel to explore how the UN system could work more coherently and effectively across the areas of development, humanitarian assistance and the environment. UK Chancellor Gordon Brown is one of the 15 members of the panel.

International Court of Justice names British legal expert as its first female president

Rosalyn Higgins, who more than a decade ago became the first female member of the International Court of Justice (ICJ), the main judicial body of the United Nations, was elected its first female president by her peers at The Hague on 6 February 2006. She will hold office for a term of three years.

A renowned international legal scholar and author who was made a Queen's Counsel in 1986, Professor Higgins was first elected to the Court in July 1995 and was re-elected in February of 2000. She was made a Dame Commander of the British Empire in 1995.

The 15-member ICJ settles disputes between states and gives advisory opinions to UN organs and specialised agencies. The Court currently has 10 cases pending.



A progress report on

The text of **Secretary-General Kofi Annan's speech** to UNA-UK, Central Hall Westminster, London, 31 January 2006

“

First of all, let me thank you for this invitation, thank you for being here, and for holding this meeting in this place, at this time.

Last year we celebrated the 60th anniversary of the Charter of the United Nations. Today we celebrate the UN's 60th birthday as a working organisation.

In this very hall, on 10 January 1946, the General Assembly met for the first time. On 17 January, in Church House, just across the road, the Security Council came into being. On 1 February, Trygve Lie of Norway was elected, and on the following day formally installed, as the first Secretary-General.

Aha! You had forgotten that bit. Don't worry. We Secretaries-General are used to being overlooked. Sixty years ago, when the American ambassador rose in

this hall to recommend the candidate chosen by the Security Council, he had to get Brian Urquhart to point Trygve Lie out to him – and then proceeded to mispronounce his name.

(The best thing about that story, of course, is that Brian is still very much part of the UN family, and still helping to point us in the right direction.)

But what, you ask, was Brian doing there, and how had the Assembly and the Council managed to organise themselves without a Secretary-General to tell them where to sit, and how to vote?

The answer is that Brian was working for the Acting Secretary-General, who was a famous British diplomat, Gladwyn Jebb. Right from the start, you see, the Brits had quietly put themselves in charge.

And so it has been ever since. You may have noticed that one of your compatriots has even infiltrated himself as my *Chef de Cabinet*.

In the United Nations, as one of Jack Straw's predecessors said, you punch above your weight.

One such skilful pugilist is Lord Hannay. He was kind enough to serve on my High-Level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change, and made an enormously valuable contribution.

David, I'm delighted that you have taken on the chairmanship of UNA-UK. You and Sam Daws will make a dream team. I am very grateful to Sam, to Richard Jolly,

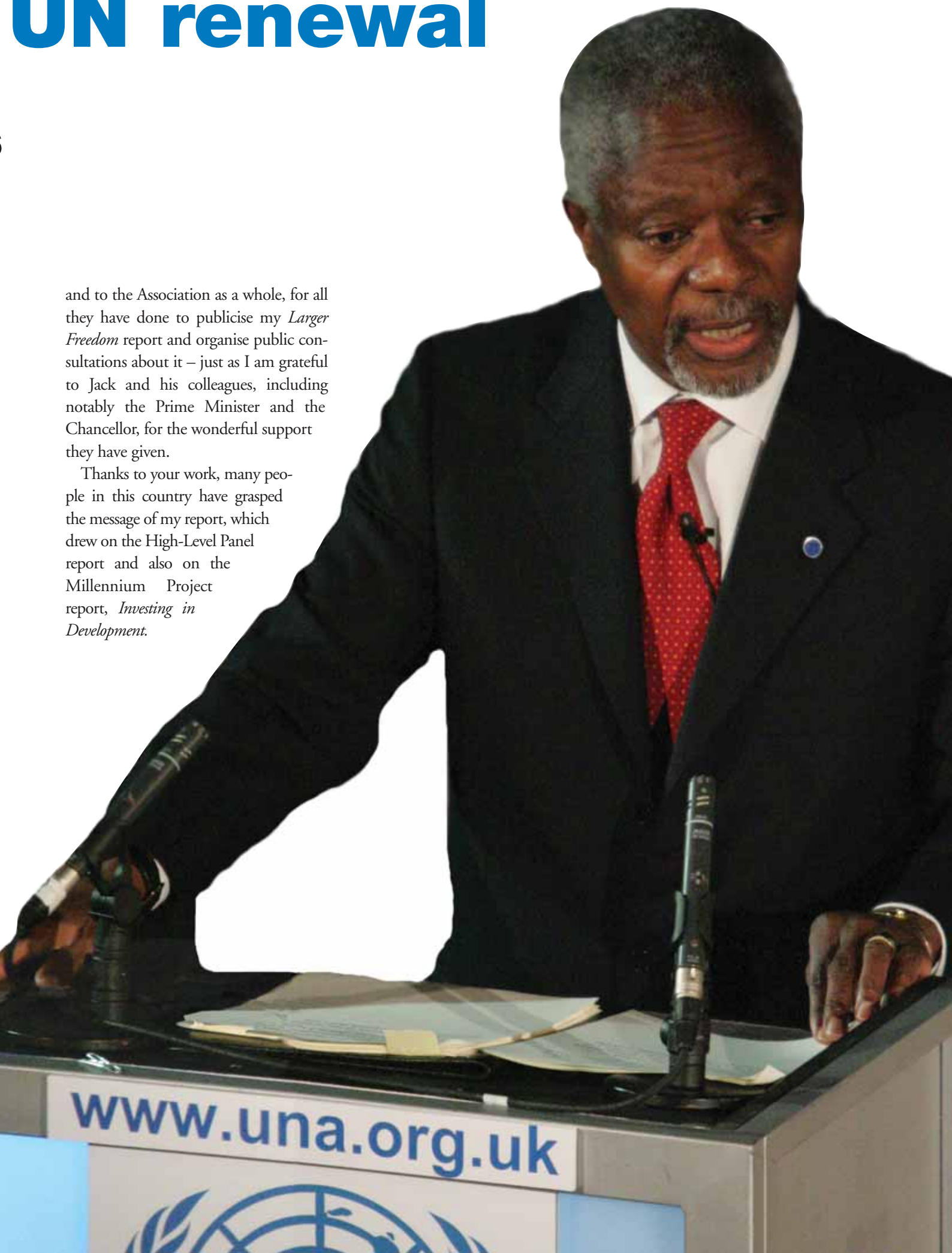




UN renewal

and to the Association as a whole, for all they have done to publicise my *Larger Freedom* report and organise public consultations about it – just as I am grateful to Jack and his colleagues, including notably the Prime Minister and the Chancellor, for the wonderful support they have given.

Thanks to your work, many people in this country have grasped the message of my report, which drew on the High-Level Panel report and also on the Millennium Project report, *Investing in Development*.





Put simply, that message is twofold. First, we are all in the same boat. More than ever before, the human race faces global problems – from poverty and inequality to nuclear proliferation, from climate change to bird flu, from terrorism to HIV/AIDS, from ethnic cleansing and genocide to trafficking in the lives and bodies of human beings. So it obviously makes sense to come together and work out global solutions.

And secondly, the three freedoms which all human beings crave – freedom from want, freedom from war or large-scale violence, and freedom from arbitrary or degrading treatment – are closely interconnected. There is no long-term security without development. There is no development without security. And no society can long remain secure, or prosperous, without respect for human rights and the rule of law.

That is the premise on which the *Larger Freedom* agenda is based – and since you have taken such a keen interest in it, I owe you a progress report.

It was, as you know, an agenda for the World Summit last September. So, let me start by mentioning the areas where the Summit took important steps forward. Obviously, I didn't get everything I had hoped for, but they did take some important steps forward.

First, it helped stimulate major new commitments of aid and debt relief – amounting to a doubling of aid for Africa – and won a strong and unanimous reaffirmation of the Millennium Development Goals. There especially I must salute the UK's leadership, both in the Group of Eight and in the European Union.

The developing countries, too, gave very important commitments

– starting with an undertaking to produce, by the end of this year, national strategies for reaching the MDGs by 2015.

In the area of humanitarian relief, the Summit has given us a much improved emergency fund, which should enable us to respond promptly whenever disaster strikes.

In the area of peace and security, member states agreed to "strongly condemn terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, committed by whomever, wherever and for whatever purposes". And they instructed the General Assembly, "without delay", to develop, adopt and implement a comprehensive global counterterrorism strategy, built on the elements that I set out in Madrid last March.

But, their most concrete decision in this area was the creation of a Peacebuilding Commission. This body will fill a real institutional gap – and ensure that attention and resources are devoted to countries emerging from violence, long after peacekeepers have left.

In the area of human rights, we have got a strengthened office, with significant new resources, for the High Commissioner. We got a warm endorsement for the new Democracy Fund. And I hope, in the next week or two, we may see agreement on a new Human Rights Council, to replace the discredited Commission.

Most precious of all to me, is the Summit's acceptance that States, both individually and collectively, have a responsibility to protect populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity. This is a major breakthrough, which I had been advocating for years.

Finally, the Summit opened the door to big changes in the way the United Nations is managed. Some



of these I have already been able to move ahead with, such as creating an ethics office and guaranteeing stronger protection for whistleblowers. But, the main ones are still ahead.

Indeed, many of the Summit's decisions are only commitments in principle. The hard struggle now is to get them implemented, in detail and in practice.

Take, for instance, the commitments for development, from both donor and developing countries. Pushing these through each country's political system, against powerful vested interests, will require a sustained political effort. And, a similar effort will be needed to achieve the breakthrough on trade, giving developing countries a real chance to compete in the global market.

On peace and security, member states have yet to respond to the need, which the Summit stressed, "to make every effort" to reach agreement on a comprehensive convention on terrorism, within the present session of the General Assembly. It is vital that they do so, as well as developing a comprehensive counter-terrorism strategy with the urgency the Summit called for. You in this city know all too well that terrorism is a global scourge, and how important it is that all nations work together to defeat it.

Much the same applies to the commitments for human rights. Negotiations on the new Human Rights Council need to be completed by mid-February, before the old Commission on Human Rights begins another annual session. And those negotiations are by no means guaranteed to succeed. Now is the time when all who really care about human rights must make the maximum effort, to ensure that we do get an authorita-

tive Human Rights Council, able to command respect and to stand up for the rights of the oppressed throughout the world.

And that applies, also, to the splendid declaration of willingness to take action "in a timely and decisive manner, through the Security Council" to protect populations whose own governments fail to do so. This will only be meaningful if the Security Council is prepared to act on it. And the Council faces a clear test right now, since the African Union has signaled its wish to see its mission in Darfur transformed into a UN peace operation.

That gives the Council an inescapable responsibility to act, swiftly and decisively, to halt the killing, rape and ethnic cleansing to which people in Darfur are still being subjected.

It remains to be seen, too, whether we shall get the thorough overhaul of all our rules governing personnel and resources, to which the Summit opened the door, and which we badly need, if we are to have a management system that is up to handling the operational responsibilities given to us by member states over the last 15 years. For this, it is vital that member states agree to act on the proposals I shall submit next month.

At the same time, the General Assembly is going to undertake a review of all the mandates still in force, which were given to the Organisation by member states between 1946 and 2001. You can imagine the challenge. This should make it possible to avoid much duplication and waste, and ensure that our work reflects the current priorities of member states, rather than those of yesteryear.

None of these reforms are easy for member states to agree on, because of the profound suspicions





UKMUN changes the history of the Cold War

Model UN Security Council solves the Suez Crisis at Central Hall Westminster

Rory Broomfield is Deputy Secretary-General of UK Model UN (UKMUN).

As part of the 60th anniversary celebrations which were held at Central Hall Westminster on 31 January 2006, UKMUN staged its largest and most successful Campaign 24 event to date, and was able to widen participation in Model UN events throughout the UK.

The committee was a Historical Security Council that debated the security dilemma arising out of Egypt's nationalisation of the Suez Canal in 1956. Delegates representing the Security Council as it was then negotiated a number of Cold War issues such as state security and influence within the Middle East. The struggle for power and state survival increased the intensity of the Model UN debate, and the Cold War security paradigm was revived.

Finally, the delegates arrived at a solution on the ownership of the Canal, and the international community breathed a hypothetical sigh of relief as a resolution, allowing for a peaceful outcome, was agreed. The resolution, gaining near unanimous support in the Council, also allowed for a possible aversion of the six-day war of 1967. University students doing a better job than real diplomats? At last, the future of diplomacy appears to be in safe hands!

A big thank you to all the delegates who took part in this event, and further thanks to UNA-UK for its continued support of UKMUN and for providing students in the UK with a respected and critical friend of the United Nations. Please see www.una.org.uk/education for details of future UKMUN events.



between developing and donor countries, between small states and big, and often between the single remaining superpower and everyone else.

Those suspicions affected the Summit, too. There are areas where world leaders failed to reach any agreement at all.

The biggest disappointment, for me, was their failure to chart a way forward on disarmament and non-proliferation.

Can there be any threat more alarming, in today's world, than that of a nuclear or biological weapon falling into the hands of terrorists, or being used by a state, as a result of some terrible misunderstanding or miscalculation? The more states have such weapons, the greater the risk. And, the more those states that already have them increase their arsenals, or insist that such weapons are essential to their national security, the more other states feel that they too must have them, for their security.

For 35 years the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty has been remarkably successful in protecting mankind from this danger. But now, it faces a very serious challenge.

Today's headlines concern Iran – rightly so, for basic treaty obligations and commitments are at stake. For signatories of the NPT, the right to develop nuclear energy is conditional, on the solemn obligation not to build or acquire nuclear weapons, and to comply with standards set and monitored by the International Atomic Energy Agency.

But, when we step back from the headlines, it should be clear that we cannot continue to lurch from crisis to crisis, until the regime is buried beneath a cascade of nuclear proliferation.

Twice last year, governments had the chance to strengthen the foundations of the NPT regime, by agreeing on more robust IAEA inspections; incentives and guarantees for countries to forego the enrichment and reprocessing of fissile materials; and energetic steps to meet disarmament commitments.

Both times, they failed. We cannot afford any more such squandered chances.

Foreign Secretary, I greatly appreciated the efforts to rebuild the non-proliferation consensus that you made last year, working with six other foreign ministers.

This is one of the few serious multilateral efforts that have been made recently to strengthen a key pillar of collective security. I urge you to continue it.

The Summit's other great failure, of course, was that it did not agree on enlargement of the Security Council.

Although the UK supported enlargement, I suspect that in London, as in other capitals of existing permanent members, not many tears are shed over this failure.

But do not underestimate the slow erosion of the UN's authority and legitimacy that stems from the perception that it has a very narrow power-base, with just five countries calling the shots. I have in the past described this as a democracy deficit.

It is this feeling of frustration and exclusion that prompts many states to exercise the only power they do have: the power to block other reforms, such as better management – since some see even this as an attempt by the big boys to grab yet more power for themselves.

So the base must be broadened. Sooner or later, the Security Council will have to be enlarged. But, meanwhile,



there are other ways to give more states more of a say in UN decisions.

The permanent members could pay more attention to the elected members – and the General Assembly could take more care to elect members who are up to the responsibility.

And the Council as a whole should be more willing to share power with other organs of the United Nations, including the new Human Rights Council and Peacebuilding Commission, a reformed Economic and Social Council, and the General Assembly itself. If these institutions win more respect and greater powers, there will be opportunities for more member states to exercise those powers – which in turn will give them a renewed feeling of commitment to the Organisation, and a stronger interest in making it work.

Britain has the experience and prestige to play a leading role in reforming the governance of the United Nations. It has in fact already increased its prestige, by showing readiness not to put all its eggs in the permanent membership basket.

What looks like giving away power can increase British influence – because, if the UN is a ring in which you punch above your weight, it's in your interest to ensure that it's a ring the rest of the world really respects and cares about. In fact, the Gladwyn Jebbs of today or tomorrow could play as big a role in recasting the UN edifice, as their forebears did in the great institution-building exercise of 60 years ago.

If we are to have a UN capable of coping with today's crises and tomorrow's – from Doha to Darfur, from global terrorism to global warming – a real effort

of statesmanship and confidence-rebuilding is required. And Britain has a major role to play. Yours is a unique position, given your ties of language and friendship with the United States, your link to many developing countries through the Commonwealth, and your role as a leading member of the European Union.

I fervently hope that, at the end of this year, I shall be able to hand on to my successor an organisation better equipped to meet the challenges of the 21st century, and to serve the peoples in whose name it was founded. And I count on Britain to play, not a supporting, but a leading role in making that come about.



Kofi Annan answers young people's questions about the future of the UN

Unofficial record of the question and answer session with UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan at Central Hall Westminster on 31 January 2006

Nadhia Ahmad, from Glasgow UNA: Secretary-General, you mentioned the ongoing negotiations to create a new Human Rights Council. What changes are required to make the new Council an improvement over the existing Commission on Human Rights?

Secretary-General: Let me say that the current Human Rights Commission has been discredited to a great extent. It has been politicised – in fact sometimes governments joined the Council, not to promote the human rights of their people, but to ensure that they were not condemned by the Commission. And at the end of the day, when they have fought each other, protected each other and tried to accuse each other, it's very difficult to define the rights and the peoples whose interests that they are there to defend. The new Human Rights Council will meet throughout the year, while the Commission meets only 6 weeks a year. The Council will have the

right to intervene or sound the alarm in cases where there are gross and systematic abuses of human rights. It would also have the mandate to look at the human rights record of any of the members. In fact, I have suggested they should start with those who are fighting to serve on the new Council. They should start reviewing their own records and then move on to the others. This would also remove the accusations of selectivity. I recall that the Human Rights Commission sent a delegation, a rapporteur actually, to the United States to look into capital punishment, and former Senator Helms was very upset. He said, "Why are they doing this? Do they think we are some sort of banana republic?" And this is the United States. But of course if you set up this new system, they have the right to look at everyone's record. But I think the most important thing is that we also hope that we will be able to raise the level of participation in the Council by insisting that to

get elected you need a two-thirds vote in the General Assembly. As it works now, we have a regional distribution of the positions and if a region has two seats and they put forward two countries they go in automatically. Under my proposals for a new system, even if a region puts them up, they need to garner two thirds of the General Assembly's support. Otherwise they do not get in and the region will have to make a fresh submission. So I think these things should be able to help us. Thank you.

Richard Bartlett, from Harrogate UNA: Secretary-General, in your speech, you urged the international community to act swiftly and decisively, under the responsibility to protect principle, in respect to Darfur. Should this principle also be invoked in the cases of the Congo and Uganda?

Secretary-General: Yes, you heard what I said about Darfur. In the Congo we are



already on the ground. We have about 17,000 troops and we had hoped to get more which the member states had not been able to oblige us. We are working out arrangements with the European Union where they are setting up this rapid reaction force and what we are doing is working out standby arrangements with them so that if we need additional support they will come in and support us just as Britain did in Sierra Leone when the peacekeepers got into trouble.

Northern Uganda is now on the radar. For a long time it was ignored. There is a serious humanitarian situation there and it is also important to know that the head of the Lord's Resistance movement is one of those accused by the International Criminal Court. So they are seeking to arrest him and put him on trial. So even though we haven't sent in peacekeepers we are taking action. We are active on the humanitarian front. We are trying to make those who have committed these atrocities accountable. And I hope in time, I will not exclude that, in time, the Organisation may want to do more.

Marina Faggionato, from Westminster
UNA: Mr Annan, you have now served as Secretary-General of the United Nations for nine years. Do you have any regrets and what are you most proud of having achieved?

Secretary-General: How much time do I have? Yes, you cannot do this kind of job for as long as I have done in the world we live in and not have regrets. I do have regrets. I regret that I was unable to breach the divisions amongst member states over the Iraq war. The divisions are still there. They are healing, but I was really deeply disappointed that I could not help bridge the differences. [Applause]

And of course, recently you have all heard a lot about the Oil-for-Food Programme. And I think I regret that I did not pay attention sooner to the problems in the Programme. Whether I would have been able to deal with it or not, given the way it

was set up and the responsibility centres were distributed, but I should have probably paid more attention to the difficulties in that.

And I think the other thing that has hurt the Organisation, myself and the staff, is the distraction that has been caused by these politically-motivated campaigns against the UN and against instances of corruption by staff members blown completely out of proportion. In fact, when you look at the records and the facts, up to \$36 million of investigation, and the kind of scrubbing the UN was given, only one staff member was found to have maybe taken \$150,000 out of a \$64 billion programme. If there was a scandal, it was with the companies and not so much with UN individuals. There may have been instances of mismanagement, yes, maybe we didn't manage it effectively, but not corruption. These are accusations which have really hurt quite a lot. We have very serious, dedicated staff members who give their all, who go to places around the world to serve the needy. They serve in places that governments do not dare send their soldiers and I think they deserve a little bit of thanks and a bit more respect than the badgering....[Applause]

On the things I am proud of – I think I am proud that I have been able to broaden the constituency of the UN, reminding the public and the members that they should not be only an organisation of governments talking to each other, that we needed to bring in the peoples, we needed to work with NGOs, with the private sector, foundations. When I took over I sort of looked at what we had to do and our responsibilities were expanding and spreading and there was no way we were going to be able to go back day after day, month after month, to the same government asking for more and more money to do what we had to do. So the only way we could expand our capacity was working in partnership with other people who were working in the same area, whether private sector or civil society, and the issues we were dealing with couldn't be solved by governments alone anyway. So, reaching out and working with them in partnership has

been one of my proudest achievements. And of course, with the issuance of the report *We, the Peoples*, we have also been able to provide a common framework for development which has been accepted by governments, by NGOs, and by all the agencies, and I think it is a unique example where we have a common framework for development, which is so simple that the average man and woman in the street understand it. And we are putting lots of energy behind it. And of course, in the *Larger Freedom* document, which the Foreign Secretary spoke about, I have tried to energise the member states to take a critical look at the Organisation and prepare it for the 21st century. I was very pleased that at the end of the last Summit the member states have come to accept the inescapable links between security, development, human rights and the rule of law and that, because of the work David Hannay and others did, they had also accepted a broader definition of threats rather than the conventional one of conflict and war between states or civil war. Today we consider poverty, infectious diseases and environmental degradation a threat, along with terrorism, along with weapons of mass destruction. Look at all the excitement over the avian flu. It is a threat for the whole world. We saw it with SARS. We all worry about terrorism. But we also have to remember that, depending on where you live and where you stand, your perception of threat is quite different. I live in America and if you were to ask me, because of the way the press plays it and the speeches you hear, I would probably tell you terrorism is the most important threat. But if I go to South Africa, they would probably tell me HIV/AIDS. Someone else will tell me hunger. And if I lived on a small island, which could be washed away through global warming, I would tell you it is environmental degradation and climate. So, we have really opened up a debate and I think intellectually it was quite an achievement to get the member states to walk away with that understanding.

Thank you very much.



Present at the Creation: an eye-witness account of the first General Assembly

Personal recollections of Archie Mackenzie, who was a member of the British delegation to the first General Assembly in Central Hall Westminster in 1946, as well as a participant in the drafting of the Charter at Dumbarton Oaks and San Francisco.

“One of my most vivid memories of the first General Assembly was of the unusual silence in Central Hall as King George VI read his inaugural speech. This was doubtless partly because of the King's known speech defect which made it difficult for the delegates to hear him, but also because the deep sincerity of his belief in the new organisation was communicating itself to the audience. The Queen referred to his deep belief in the UN ideal at her own speech at the 50th anniversary celebrations in Westminster Hall in 1995.



The state banquet at the first Assembly was held in the Painted Hall at Greenwich, the creation of Wren, Hawkesmoor and Vanburgh. Unfortunately all the windows had been blown out in the blitz and, in 1946, were still covered with gauze. The banquet was held on a bitterly cold night and at times I felt as if the only heat in the Painted Hall was provided by the candles on the tables. Halfway through the banquet one of the American delegates, Senator Arthur Vandenberg of Michigan, who happened to be sitting opposite me, walked out. Happily, because of protocol apprehensions, he returned in 10 minutes wearing the largest Astrakhan fur coat I have ever seen, and the speeches went on undisturbed.

Inevitably there was much speculation about who would be chosen as the first Secretary-General. Amongst the front-runners were many notables: Gladwyn Jebb of the UK, who had

been a very successful Executive Secretary of the Preparatory Commission and who was installed as Acting Secretary of the Assembly; Paul Henri Spaak of Belgium, who had already been appointed President of the Assembly; and Mike Pearson, the Foreign Minister of Canada. However, we were all aware that this was a vetoable decision and so the ultimate choice was inevitably a compromise candidate: Trygve Lie, the socialist Foreign Minister of Norway.

There was also feverish discussion about the appropriate site for the headquarters of the new organisation. Britain at first favoured Geneva – thanks to the enthusiasm of Philip Noel-Baker who had worked at the League of Nations. However, as the Cold War had not yet broken out, the Soviet Union campaigned vigorously for the United States, and in particular for San Francisco, doubtless remembering (as we all did) the boundless Californian generosity and the euphoria of the founding conference. The Arab countries were unusual allies of the Soviet Union on this occasion, favouring San Francisco rather than New York. Ultimately, the pull of the New World proved irresistible. The US government remained neutral throughout, but various American cities were already bombarding London with lavish invitations: Philadelphia, Boston, Los Angeles, San Francisco and New York, as well as (if my memory is accurate) Hartford, Connecticut and Kansas City. This posed an *embarrass de choix* for the delegates in London, and so one of the first Ad Hoc Committees was set up to pursue the matter in America. The British delegate on this Headquarters Committee was Geoffrey Wilson, later knighted when he became Permanent Secretary of the Overseas Development Ministry. Ultimately, thanks to the largesse of the Rockefeller family, a suitable site was found on the East River in Manhattan. However, the headquarters buildings were not completed until 1952 and in the meantime the UN functioned from a converted gyroscope factory at Lake Success on Long Island.

The Security Council also began life in London at Church House, opposite Central Hall, and it is not often remembered that it was Iran who placed the first item on its agenda – a complaint against the continued occupation of Northern Persia by Soviet forces despite the ending of the war. Ultimately the Russians withdrew by May 1946 and so, technically speaking, the first result on the Security Council scoreboard was Iran 1, Soviet Union 0.

My highest hope today is that somehow the UN can refind the faith and even the daring that were visible at its launching.”



The search for the next Secretary-General

Sam Daws is Executive Director of UNA-UK.

Media speculation about who will become the next UN Secretary-General (UNSG) has gathered momentum in recent months. A decision, however, may well not be taken until the autumn, possibly close to the expiry of Kofi Annan's term of office on 31 December 2006. So who will be chosen? The decision is taken by the General Assembly upon the recommendation of the Security Council, which effectively gives the five permanent members a veto over the selection. All seven Secretaries-General have been male. This

has led to a campaign by Equality Now, supported by many UNA members, for a woman to be chosen to replace Kofi Annan. However desirable, this remains unlikely as the key potential candidates being floated by governments are almost all men. There is also momentum, backed by UNA's Chair Lord Hannay, to end the informal system of geographical rotation of the post, now that every region has had a turn. However, in all likelihood the next Secretary-General will come from Asia, because of the private agreement made by the African and Asian regional groups in 2001 when Kofi Annan was reappointed for a second term. The US has proposed candidates from Latvia and Poland, but Russia has intimated it would veto such candidates from 'new Europe'.

Asia, as defined by the UN, is a wide-ranging area, stretching from the Middle East to the Pacific rim. Three (and a half) candidates have so far been declared: Surakiart Sathirathai of Thailand, Ban

Ki-moon of South Korea, Jayantha Dhanapala of Sri Lanka, and José Ramos-Horta of East Timor (the latter is only half-declared but has said immodestly that he would make a great Secretary-General). History suggests that UNSG candidates who declare early invariably do not reach the finishing line, because this gives countries time to find things they don't like about them. Other (undeclared) names to watch are Prince Zeid of Jordan, Razali Ismail of Malaysia, Surin Pitsuwan of Thailand, and Ali Alatas of Indonesia.

Many of those close to key governments see UN Under-Secretary-General Shashi Tharoor as someone the P5 may eventually rally around. He has direct experience of the UN's political, humanitarian and peacekeeping work and is a skilled communicator who can articulate a vision for the Organisation – essential in this media age. Dr Tharoor was born in the UK but is a national of India.

An article on this subject by Lord Hannay appeared in the Financial Times on 23 March 2006. Copies of the article can be provided through the UNA Trust. Contact Matt Ripley on 020 7766 3459.

United Nations Secretaries-General

Kofi Annan (Ghana) 1997-2006
Boutros Boutros-Ghali (Egypt) 1992-1996
Javier Perez de Cuellar (Peru) 1982-1991
Kurt Waldheim (Austria) 1972-1981
U Thant (Burma) 1961-1971
Dag Hammarskjöld (Sweden) 1953-1961
Trygve Lie (Norway) 1946-1952

A Tribute to Sir Richard Jolly

Rod Fielding is Vice-Chair of the UNA-UK Board.

Sir Richard Jolly, after five years as Chair of the UNA-UK Board of Directors, has now stepped down following the expiry of his term. With a wealth of experience of the UN system and a well-established reputation in the field of development economics, Richard was ideally suited to head the Association.

Richard has made invaluable contributions to the work of UNA, both through direct engagement with the membership and through his leadership of the UNA-UK Board. He has always made himself available to speak at branch meetings, and has over the years been an active participant in Annual Conference. He managed the business of the Board with tact and skill: members of the Board particularly appreciated the way in which he encouraged open debate whilst providing a firm context within which discussion could

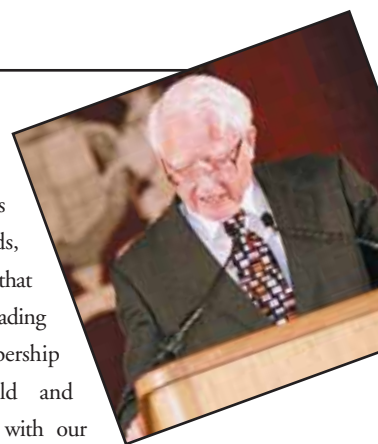
valuably take place. A strong sense of direction was the hallmark of Richard Jolly's chairmanship.

Richard Jolly piloted UNA-UK successfully through a few very difficult years, which culminated in the closure of UNA's heavily loss-making programme, Stakeholder Forum, and its after-effects: a dramatic reduction in the size of UNA's paid staff and a stark depletion of its financial reserves. As one who worked closely with Richard, I know how worried he was about these financial problems and how he gave unstintingly of his time to resolve the matter and to ensure that the Association survived intact.

By initiating the 'away-day' process, Richard generated a vision, subsequently endorsed by the UNA-UK Board, for a transformation of UNA – a new emphasis on sound financial management and good governance, a return to our core focus on the

United Nations, attracting new members of all ages and backgrounds, and a recognition that our strength as a leading grassroots membership organisation could and must be coupled with our growing credibility as the UK's policy authority on the UN. The away-day process was a great success and led to the identification and appointment of Sam Daws as the new Executive Director to take forward UNA-UK's renewal following the retirement of Malcolm Harper.

UNA-UK owes a great debt of gratitude to Sir Richard Jolly as Chair of the Board. He combined the effective management of the business of the Board with a sense of purpose and vision and an unwavering confidence in the future to which we should aspire. On behalf of UNA-UK I have great pleasure in paying tribute to him.





The 50th session of the Commission on the Status of Women

Katherine Ronderos reports from the UN in New York.

I was delighted to represent UNA-UK and WILPF UK (Women's International League for Peace and Freedom) at the 50th session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW), which took place from 27 February to 10 March 2006 in New York.

The UN Commission on the Status of Women was established as a functional commission of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) in 1946 to prepare recommendations and reports to the Council on promoting women's rights in political, economic, civil, social and educational fields. The Commission has been an inspiration for women in all parts of the world. It has had a positive impact on legal and policy development at national level, particularly through the strengthening of provisions in constitutions, the establishment of commissions to review legislation, and the development of special measures to enhance women's participation across a variety of areas.

The Commission has played a catalytic role in promoting gender mainstreaming at the national level and within the UN system. This is demonstrated through the role ECOSOC now plays in promoting and monitoring gender mainstreaming, the work of the General Assembly on the human rights of women, and the ground-breaking work of the Security Council on women, peace and security.

At the 50th session, resolutions were adopted condemning the con-



Photo © UN/DPI

sequences of hostage-taking, torture and other cruel or degrading treatment or punishment including rape, slavery and the trafficking of women and children. The Commission also considered the following two themes:

- enhanced participation of women in development, i.e. an enabling environment for achieving gender equality and the advancement of women, taking into account, *inter alia*, the fields of education, health and work; and
- equal participation of women and men in decision-making processes at all levels.

After having taken decisions concerning Palestinian women, women and girls in Afghanistan, the release of women and children taken hostage, HIV/AIDS, and the advisability of a special rapporteur on laws that discriminate against women, the 50th

session of the CSW strongly urged all warring parties across the globe to respect international humanitarian law and to protect civilians by providing safe, unimpeded access to humanitarian assistance for women and children. It stressed both the need to end impunity for war crimes and the responsibility of all states to prosecute those responsible.

At the CSW's 50th session I had the opportunity to participate in various meetings which highlighted the vital role that NGOs play in the continued advancement of women's rights worldwide. Representatives of international NGOs were able to communicate their concerns and to emphasise the role of women in furthering development, human rights and peace and security, and in turning the ideals of the UN into reality.

For more information on the 50th Session of the Commission on the Status of Women please visit www.una.org.uk/women



Will the UN's reforms make a difference?

This article by **Lord Hannay of Chiswick** is reproduced from *The Economist's* 'The World in 2006'. Lord Hannay is the new Chair of UNA-UK.



Lord Hannay with Jack Straw and Kofi Annan following the Secretary-General's speech to UNA-UK in January 2006.

Photo © UNA-UK/Benedict Parsons, 2006

About David Hannay

David Hannay was born in London on 28 September 1935 and educated at Winchester College and New College, Oxford. He entered the Foreign and Commonwealth Office in 1959, and was initially posted to positions in Tehran and Kabul. Starting in 1965 and continuing into the early 1970s, he was involved in the discussions that led to the UK's entry into the European Communities.

During the 1970s he did a four-year spell in the European Commission in Brussels, and was involved with energy and Middle Eastern policy. He was Minister at the British Embassy in Washington DC from 1984 to 1985, and then served as Ambassador and Permanent Representative to the European Communities from 1985 to 1990. He then spent the next five years as Ambassador and Permanent Representative to the United Nations.

Following his retirement from the diplomatic service he was the British Special Representative for Cyprus between 1996 and 2003 and a member of the UN Secretary-General's High-Level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change, which submitted its report in December 2004.

In 2001 he was created a life peer. He has been pro-Chancellor of the University of Birmingham since 2001. In 2003 he was made a Companion of Honour.

For this article, please see the printed version of *New World* or *The Economist's* 'The World in 2006'





The UN and Darfur

Alexander Ramsbotham, Head of UNA-UK's John Bright Peace and Security Programme

In Darfur, the violence is escalating and the humanitarian crisis deepening. The African Union Mission in Sudan (AMIS), which comprises nearly 7,000 African peacekeepers, has been commended for its role in promoting security in the region under extremely difficult conditions and severe resource constraints. However, the African Union (AU) does not have the capacity to address the scale of the crisis, leading to mounting appeals for the Security Council to act on the 'responsibility to protect' (R2P) principle and to deploy a UN operation in the region [see Box 1].

The African Union Mission in Sudan

In a 9 March 2006 report to the Security Council, the Secretary-General highlighted the escalation in Darfur of armed clashes, in which rebel movements and Sudanese government forces repeatedly violated their agreed ceasefire, with Janjaweed militia groups fueling the violence. The report noted that this conflict has resulted in many deaths and has inflated the number of displaced civilians beyond a total of 3 million, while causing the destruction of property and livelihoods.



Darfur presents a tough environment for AMIS. The region is roughly the size of France and AMIS has encountered serious logistical problems. Acute financial difficulties further undermine the AU's capacity to plan for the long term, while the effectiveness of external support is diminished by poor coordination and competing agendas among the various donors.

A 3 February 2006 statement by then President of the Security Council, US Ambassador John Bolton, announced the Council's request that the Secretary-General initiate contingency planning on a range of options for a possible transition from AMIS to a UN operation. On 17 February 2006, President George W. Bush, following private talks with the Secretary-General earlier in the month, called for an additional 7,000 troops to be placed under UN command to support AMIS in Darfur.



Box 1: Kofi Annan on the crisis in Darfur

“ [The UN World Summit's] splendid declaration of willingness to take action 'in a timely and decisive manner, through the Security Council' to protect populations whose own governments fail to do so ... will only be meaningful if the Security Council is prepared to act on it. And the Council faces a clear test right now, since the African Union has signaled its wish to see its mission in Darfur transformed into a UN peace operation. That gives the Council an inescapable responsibility to act, swiftly and decisively, to halt the killing, rape and ethnic cleansing to which people in Darfur are still being subjected ”

Address by UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan to UNA-UK, 31 January 2006, Central Hall Westminster, London

Box 2: AU Peace and Security Council statement

“ [The AU Peace and Security Council] decides to support in principle the transition from AMIS to a UN Operation, within the framework of the partnership between the AU and the United Nations in the promotion of peace, security and stability in Africa ”

Communiqué of the 46th meeting of the AU Peace and Security Council, 10 March 2006



ur: R2P in Practice?

On 10 March this year, the AU Peace and Security Council decided to support 'in principle' the transition of AMIS to a UN operation [see Box 2].

Transition to a UN operation

African peacekeepers serving with AMIS lack the necessary equipment and mandate to protect vulnerable citizens in Darfur, and to enforce the ceasefire routinely broken by the rebels, militia and government forces.

The Secretary-General's 9 March report noted the establishment of a UN operation planning team to report to the Security Council on options for a possible transition. The report highlighted the achievements of AMIS and stressed that the transition to a UN mission in Darfur should not be characterised as the substitution of an 'African' force by an 'international' force, as a UN-led operation would depend greatly on African contributions and support. However, the report added that a possible successor operation would have to be qualitatively different from AMIS, particularly with regard to force mobility.

In his March 2005 *In Larger Freedom* report, the Secretary-General lamented developed countries' increasing reluctance to contribute troops to UN peacekeeping missions in Africa. It remains to be seen what sort of contribution the UK and other western states will make to a UN mission in Darfur.



Box 3: Hilary Benn on UK efforts to assist in Darfur

“ The UK government ... is committed to achieving peace and stability in [Darfur] with a pledge of funding in excess of £250 million in development and other assistance to Sudan over the next two years; £40 million will go to the UN's Common Humanitarian Fund, £20 million to the African Union Mission in Sudan (AMIS) and £17 million to the Multi-Donor Trust Fund ”

*UK Secretary of State for International Development
Hilary Benn, 9 March 2006*

Box 4: R2P in practice in northern Uganda?

The 20-year-long rebellion in Uganda by the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) has seen almost 2 million civilians uprooted from their homes. UN Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs, Jan Egeland, is visiting Uganda from 30 to 31 March to outline a systematic, multi-faceted UN response to the humanitarian crisis in the country. The situation of the 2 million displaced people is described by the UN as one of the world's most serious humanitarian crises, with crude mortality rates among displaced children in northern Uganda higher than those in Darfur and three times greater than the rest of Uganda. The delivery of humanitarian assistance in southern Sudan is also severely undermined by the activities of the LRA, which has been accused of grave human rights violations, including kidnapping thousands of children to serve as fighters or 'wives'.



Photos from top: Secretary-General Kofi Annan with women of the Kalma camp in Sudan; a crowd of people line the streets in Nyala to greet the Secretary-General; the Secretary-General visits burned-out mud huts in the town of Labado.

All photos © UN/Evan Schneider



The Security Council and IRAN

Alexander Ramsbotham,
Head of UNA-UK's John Bright Peace
and Security Programme

On 17 March 2006, the UN Security Council discussed formally for the first time Iran's nuclear ambitions. In particular, the Council considered Iran's adherence to its Safeguards Agreement with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) [see Boxes 1 and 2]. The involvement of the Council marks a significant step in international responses to the crisis over Iran.

The road to the Council

In January 2006, IAEA inspectors confirmed that Tehran had started to remove IAEA seals on uranium enrichment-related equipment and material at selected locations in the country. Enriching uranium is a key stage in the process of developing fissile material for use both in nuclear energy reactors and for nuclear weapons. Previously, in 2003, the IAEA had exposed a clandestine uranium enrichment programme in Iran. Tehran

maintained the programme was for peaceful purposes, but agreed to suspend enrichment and to sign the IAEA 1997 Additional Protocol [see Box 3]. Iran has not yet ratified the Protocol. In 2004, the IAEA uncovered that Iran was secretly continuing to enrich uranium. Iran has asserted that it needs – and is permitted – to develop its own capacity to enrich uranium to guarantee its access to fuel for nuclear energy.

“ We want Iran to enjoy the benefits of civil nuclear power. We are concerned only by those fuel activities which would allow the regime to acquire a nuclear bomb ”

*UK Foreign Secretary
Jack Straw*

The IAEA Board of Governors met from 2 to 4 February 2006 to discuss the

implementation of the Safeguards Agreement between Iran and the IAEA. The meeting was called in response to Iran's announcement of its decision to resume research and development activities on its nuclear energy programme from 9 January 2006.

“ If the UN Security Council can't deal with the proliferation of nuclear weapons, can't deal with the greatest threat we have with a country like Iran ... you have a real question of what it can deal with ”

*US Ambassador to the UN
John Bolton*



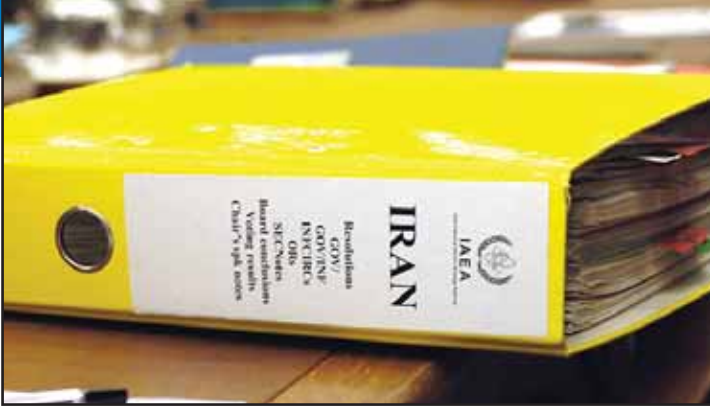
On 4 February, the IAEA Board agreed a resolution (GOV/2006/14) urging Iran to adopt a number of confidence-building measures regarding its nuclear activi-

Box 1: Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, Article III (1) [selected extract]

Each non-nuclear-weapon State Party to the [NPT] undertakes to accept safeguards ... for the exclusive purpose of verification of the fulfillment of its obligations assumed under the Treaty with a view to preventing diversion of nuclear energy from peaceful uses to nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices. Procedures for the safeguards required by this article shall be followed with respect to source or special fissionable material whether it is being produced, processed or used in any principal nuclear facility or is outside any such facility.

Box 2: Safeguards Agreements

Safeguards Agreements outline a set of activities by which the IAEA seeks to verify that a state is living up to its international undertakings under the NPT not to use nuclear programmes for nuclear weapons purposes. Over 140 states – including Iran – have entered into such agreements with the IAEA, submitting nuclear materials, facilities and activities to the scrutiny of Agency inspectors.



“ Western countries ... are not capable of inflicting the slightest blow on the Iranian nation because they need the Iranian nation. They will suffer more and they are vulnerable ”

*Iranian President
Mahmoud Ahmadinejad*

ties. The Board further requested that IAEA Director General Mohamed ElBaradei report on the implementation of the resolution to its next regular session and, immediately after that, to convey that report to the Security Council. This effectively bought more time for negotiations over the crisis, including Russia's proposal to undertake enrichment activities on behalf of Iran [see Box 4].

ElBaradei reports to the Council

ElBaradei delivered his report on the implementation of the NPT Safeguards Agreement with Iran to the IAEA Board on 27 February 2006, and then to the Security Council on 9 March.

The report outlines the IAEA's attempts to verify that Iran is not pursuing undeclared activities to enrich uranium, and its efforts to locate the origin of traces of enriched uranium particle contamination discovered at various sites in Iran. The report indicates that test results on some traces of contamination tended to support Tehran's assertion that contamination originates from outside Iran. However, no definitive conclusion could be made

on all traces of contamination. The report highlights the importance of gaining additional data on the scope and chronology of Iran's centrifuge programmes – key components in the process of enriching uranium – which would help clarify outstanding contamination issues.

While ElBaradei's report conceded that the declared nuclear material in Iran has been accounted for, it asserted that the Agency was not presently able to conclude that there are no undeclared nuclear materials or activities in Iran, adding that the already slow process of drawing such a conclusion in normal circumstances was being further delayed due to the inadequacy of the information being made available by Iran. The report urged transparency by Iran in its nuclear activities, specifically in relation to:

- access to, and cooperation by, relevant individuals;
- access to documentation related to procurement and dual use equipment; and
- access to certain military-owned workshops and research and development locations.

Box 4: The Russian proposal

Russia has presented a compromise deal proposing that Iran be allowed to engage in a joint initiative to convert uranium ore into the gas which is then rotated to produce the enriched uranium needed for nuclear fuel. The actual enrichment process itself would take place in Russia, allowing Iran secure access to nuclear fuel but addressing western and other states' fears of Iranian attempts to develop nuclear weapons capacity. At the time of going to press Iran had not yet agreed to the terms of the Russian proposal.

“ There's been very close collaboration between ... the five permanent members of the Council ... I think everybody wants to avoid another Iraq ”

*UN Deputy Secretary-General
Mark Malloch Brown*

Following the Security Council's 17 March meeting – held behind closed doors – diplomats who attended the session stated that the Council was close to agreement on the elements of a text reaffirming that Iran should comply with the demands of the IAEA Governing Board and requesting that ElBaradei report back on the matter.

Box 3: Additional Protocol

Additional Protocols were introduced to strengthen the IAEA Safeguards system. These require participating states to provide the Agency with broader information about their nuclear fuel cycle related activities, including research and development and uranium mining, and also to grant the Agency more intrusive access rights.



UNHCR's work to defend the rights of refugees at home and abroad

By **Abbas Sharif**, **Karen Wagstaff** and **Peter Kessler** of UNHCR

UNHCR Goodwill Ambassador Angelina Jolie

There was an atmosphere of joy and jubilation in Sierra Leone's Largo refugee camp in late February 2006, when 50 Liberian refugee women each received a sewing machine after successfully completing a sewing course funded by UNHCR Goodwill Ambassador Angelina Jolie.

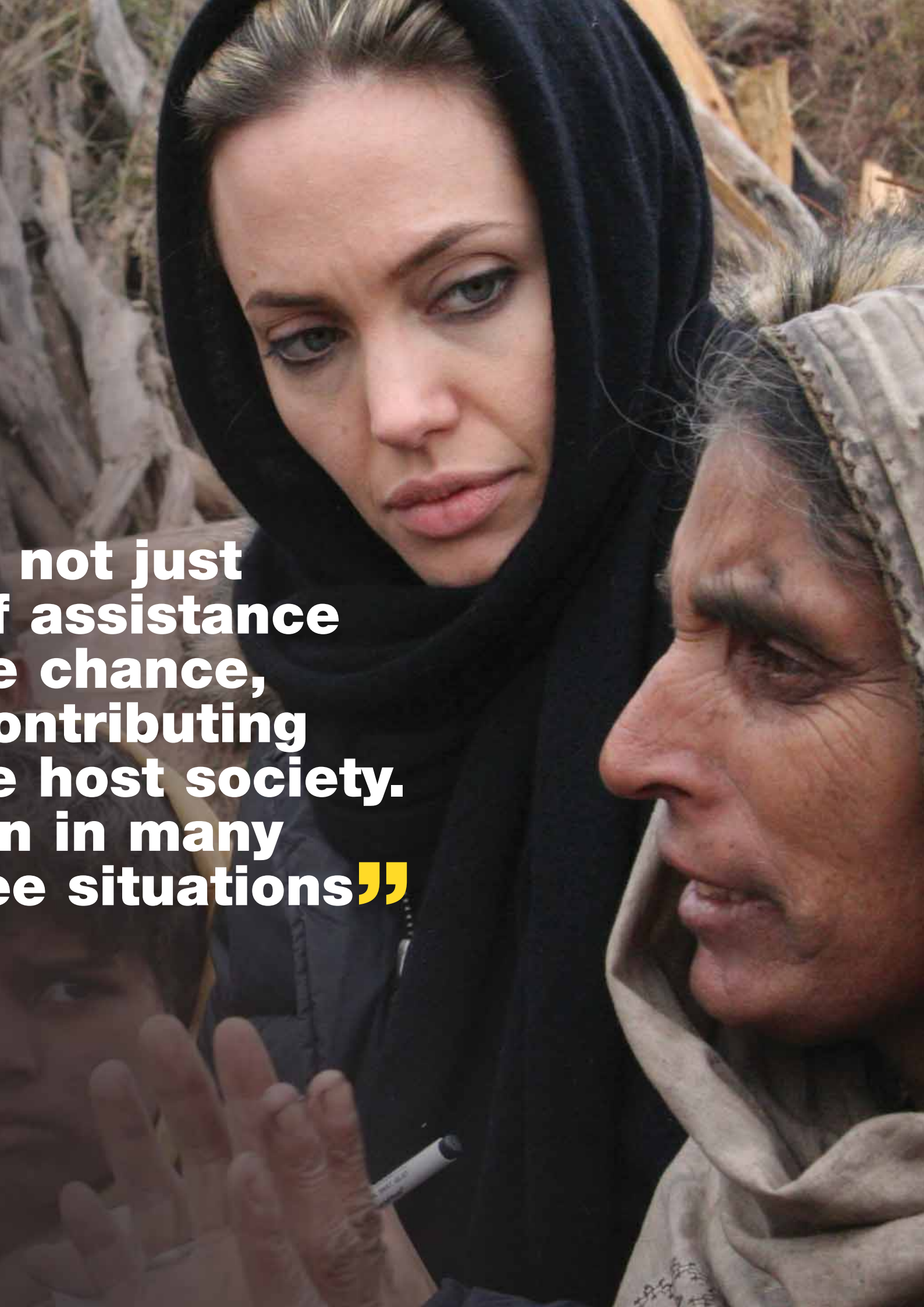
Learning these core skills and receiving the means to apply them back in their home country will ensure that these women can provide for themselves and their families – something which illustrates the monumental difference one individual donor can make in the lives of refugees. Initiatives like these also demonstrate how reliable funding for the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) can translate into concrete gains, most immediately for the refugees themselves, but also for the societies and economies to which they return.

As Jolie wrote in *Global Agenda* magazine, "The UN refugee agency, for which I act as a Goodwill Ambassador, has an annual budget of \$1.2 billion. That sounds like a lot of money, but UNHCR has a constant struggle to get its \$1.2 billion, which it uses to help and protect some 19 million people."

“Refugees are beneficiaries of but, if given the they are also co members of the This I have seen different refugee

UNHCR Goodwill Ambassador Angelina Jolie listens as a woman in this village in Jabel Sharoon 6,000 feet above sea level in Pakistan-administered Kashmir tells a UNHCR worker about her preparations for the coming winter. This includes salvaging materials from the remains of houses after the earthquake.

Photo © UNHCR/J. Redden, 2005

A close-up photograph of Angelina Jolie and an elderly woman. Angelina Jolie, on the left, is wearing a black headscarf and a dark jacket, looking down with a somber expression. The elderly woman, on the right, is wearing a light-colored headscarf and has a weathered face, looking towards Angelina. The background shows a rustic, outdoor setting with dry wood and debris.

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UNHCR staff show how to install kerosene stoves, Thuri Park camp, Muzaffarabad, Pakistan-administered Kashmir. Photo © UNHCR/M. Cierna, 2006

A refugee is a person who, "owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group, or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality, and is unable to or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country..."

Article 1A (2) of the 1951 UN Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees

As a result of these resource constraints, Jolie says, "UNHCR invariably has to cut more and more projects affecting the world's most disadvantaged people as the year progresses. Agencies like UNHCR really should not have to struggle to scrape together a few tens of millions of dollars to help rebuild shattered nations – like Angola, Sierra Leone, Liberia and southern Sudan. A quick and efficient way of rebuilding a war-torn nation helps anchor the peace in firmer soil and brings amazing dividends in terms of regional stability and economic prosperity that are to everyone's benefit."

Angelina Jolie's partnership with UNHCR began in early 2001 when she approached the agency to ask what part she could play in its global attempt to protect refugees. Shortly after spending a day in briefings with UNHCR staff in Washington DC, Jolie was on her way to Côte d'Ivoire, Tanzania and Sierra Leone, where she spent several weeks meeting refugees and working with UNHCR field staff.

"These are complex subjects. But if I'm to be an effective advocate for refugees, I need to know what I'm talking about."

Angelina Jolie has usefully brought attention to the erroneous portrayal of

About UNHCR

- UNHCR cares for more than 19 million people in 116 countries around the world.
- As the lead humanitarian agency in refugee situations and in addressing the protection, shelter and camp oversight for war-displaced persons, UNHCR aims to ensure that dangerous gaps in aid and legal protection do not occur.
- Over 97% of UNHCR funds come from voluntary donations – from governments, corporations and caring individuals.
- UNHCR has been given a mandate by UN member states to ensure that refugees' rights under the 1951 Geneva Convention are respected.
- 89% of any money donated to UNHCR is spent directly on helping refugees.



refugees as hapless victims and to the tendency to conflate, often for political purposes, 'refugees' with 'economic migrants'.

"Refugees are not just beneficiaries of assistance but, if given the chance, they are also contributing members of the host society. This I have seen in many different refugee situations."

"Those of us who are still well-disposed towards refugees, and are shocked to see them turned into hate figures to win elections or sell newspapers, are failing. We don't want uncontrolled movements of people across our borders, but we are not prepared to invest financially or politically, or even emotionally, in finding solutions in the regions they come from."

"The UN High Commissioner for Refugees António Guterres put it very succinctly", she stated in *Global Agenda*. "He said that the special status of refugees – people fleeing persecution or war – is being jeopardised by the battle over whether or not we want economic migrants."

Ms Jolie has traveled widely with UNHCR to visit refugee camps around the world. Most recently, she traveled to Pakistan in the aftermath of the earthquake which struck on 8 October 2005.

Over the last 20 years, Pakistan has sheltered millions of Afghan refugees. While more than 2.7 million of these have returned to Afghanistan, a roughly equal number remains. Jolie has contended that people and governments have "a basic obligation to help the peo-

ple of Pakistan after what they've done for refugees".

In addition to her frequent field visits Ms Jolie has been actively involved in raising awareness about the plight of refugees through World Refugee Day, which is observed on 20 June each year. Jolie commemorated the occasion in 2005 by launching multiple World Refugee Day activities in Washington DC, together with US Secretary of State

Condoleezza Rice and Paul Rusesabagina, the hotel manager who provided protection to people fleeing the 1994 genocide in Rwanda. Mr Rusesabagina was portrayed by Don Cheadle in the acclaimed 2004 film *Hotel Rwanda*.

"World Refugee Day is the day we make sure they aren't forgotten. We do not want to keep repeating the mistakes of the past."



The Pakistan earthquake disaster. Earthquake survivors in Batagram 1 camp, Batagram district, North West Frontier Province (NWFP). Photo © UNHCR/M. Pearson, 2005



Babikar Yahya, aged 70, stands with a family member in front of his tiny house built of straw in the makeshift Dorti encampment in west Darfur. Twelve other family members live close by in two small shelters made of dried branches. Photo © UNHCR, 2004

How does UNHCR distinguish between a refugee and an economic migrant?

An economic migrant normally leaves a country voluntarily to seek a better life. Should he or she elect to return home, they would continue to receive the protection of their government. Refugees flee because of the threat of persecution and cannot return safely to their homes in the prevailing circumstances.

Extracted from 'Protecting Refugees – Questions and Answers'. To read more, visit www.unhcr.org and follow the link.



How UNHCR Protects Refugees

UNHCR works around the world to safeguard the rights and well-being of refugees by:

- ensuring adherence to the 1951 Refugee Convention and other related international accords and standards;
- intervening in individual cases when important issues of principle are raised in respect to the 1951 Refugee Convention, the UNHCR Guidelines and the positions of the UNHCR Executive Committee;
- providing training for officials working with refugees;
- monitoring places of detention, particularly with respect to the protection of asylum-seeking children;
- working closely with legislators, refugee advocacy groups and lawyers to ensure refugee protection; and
- reaching out to local authorities and other opinion formers to promote integration and community cohesion.

The overwhelming majority of refugees

reside in the developing world, in countries like Tanzania, Iran and Pakistan. Indeed, the number of asylum seekers in industrialised countries has halved over the last five years and, in the UK, the number of asylum applications in 2005 was at its lowest since 1993. Nonetheless, UNHCR works hard to ensure respect for the rights of those refugees who are in the UK; to this end, UNHCR is working with the UK government on two important initiatives.

The UNHCR/UK Quality Initiative Project

UNHCR believes that the UK government, taxpayers and refugees have everything to gain from high-quality first-instance asylum decisions. In 2004, UNHCR was invited to assist the Home Office in enhancing the overall quality of first-instance decision-making through auditing existing practice and putting forward recommendations for improvements.

The Quality Initiative Project aims to

raise the quality of the refugee determination process in the UK through systematic monitoring and through the provision of advice on procedure and the application of the refugee criteria. As part of this process, UNHCR samples approximately 2% of initial decisions on asylum applications, and in July 2005 started to sample asylum interviews. UNHCR has also conducted a number of fact-finding visits and holds regular meetings with relevant Home Office staff.

The Gateway Protection Programme

Working closely with UNHCR, the UK government established a scheme in 2004 to allow up to 500 refugees a year to enter the UK. This initiative, known as the Gateway Protection Programme, is similar to existing resettlement schemes operated with UNHCR support by countries throughout the world. This initiative provides solutions for refugees in particularly vulnerable situations when resettlement in a third country is the only durable solution.

What is World Refugee Day?

As an expression of solidarity with Africa, which hosts the most refugees, and which traditionally has shown refugees great generosity, a special UN General Assembly Resolution was unanimously adopted in 2000. The resolution designated 20 June World Refugee Day. The aim of World Refugee Day is to pay tribute to refugees and to raise awareness about the problems they face. In many countries, the commemorative day has been extended: in the UK, for example, the week preceding Refugee Day has been designated Refugee Week.

What has happened in previous years?

In 2005, more than 450 events were held throughout the UK as part of Refugee Week. These events included photographic exhibitions and concerts featuring music and dancing from around the world.

What is this year's theme?

Each World Refugee Day is accorded a theme. Building on previous themes of Respect and Courage, this year's focus is Hope. The aim is to highlight: 1) what drives refugees to persevere in their search for safety, protection and a dignified life for themselves and their families; and 2) UNHCR's unique role in providing new opportunities for a fresh start for refugees.

For more details on World Refugee Day events in 2006, please keep checking UNHCR's website: www.unhcr.org.uk. You can also receive updates on such events in the UK; simply e-mail gbrloea@unhcr.org indicating that you would like to be put on UNHCR's e-mailing list. For general information on Refugee Week, visit www.refugeeweek.org.uk



Get involved

There are many ways individuals can support UNHCR's vital work:

- Make a donation that directly translates into more refugee children attending school, new shelters for refugees and vital protection assistance. You can donate online today at www.unhcr.org.uk/donate or send a cheque payable to UNHCR, Strand Bridge House, 138-142 London, WC2R 1HH.
- Write to your MP to help raise awareness of UNHCR's work and the plight of refugees and other forcibly displaced persons.
- Sign-up to UNHCR's e-newsletter at www.unhcr.org, or e-mail gbirloea@unhcr.org or call 020 7759 8090 to receive regular copies of UNHCR's *Refugees* magazine.
- Intern or volunteer for us. Find out more at www.unhcr.org.uk/interns
- Running the Flora London Marathon or participating in any other local event this year? Fundraise and donate the money to UNHCR.
- Promote positive coverage of refugees in the local media.
- Invite UNHCR staff to speak at your place of employment. UNHCR is pleased to explore and develop partnerships. If you or your company would like more information about setting up a corporate partnership with us please contact gbirloea@unhcr.org or call 020 7759 8090.
- Leave a lasting legacy. Consider bequeathing a gift to help UNHCR secure a better future for refugees.

UNA Partnerships with UNHCR

UNA Church Stretton opts to tackle terrorism through UNHCR

The Afghanistan Livelihood Project was launched by the Church Stretton branch of UNA in January 2003 to support UNHCR in its work to help refugees return to Afghanistan to rebuild their lives and communities and create a better future for their children. UNHCR's Return to Afghanistan programme focuses on providing training in practical skills that will

generate income and enable people to become self-sufficient.

"Following the shock of 9/11, we in the Church Stretton UNA branch wanted to find some way to address the problems of terrorism," said Kit Welchman, a member of UNA Church Stretton. "After much discussion, we decided on the Afghanistan Livelihood Project, because it would help returning refugees to rebuild their lives and communities, and because we valued the link with UNHCR."

In the last four years, UNA Church Stretton has raised over £10,000 through the Afghanistan Livelihood Project.

Since UNHCR began its voluntary repatriation programme for Afghanistan in 2002, it has assisted more than 3.5 million Afghans to make the journey home – more than 2.7 million from Pakistan and 800,000 from Iran. This vast movement of people represents the single largest return operation in the agency's history. For the fourth consecutive year, the voluntary repatriation of Afghans in 2005 – more than 500,000 people – was UNHCR's largest anywhere in the world. UNHCR expects in 2006 to assist a further 600,000 refugees to return to Afghanistan from Pakistan and Iran.

To find out more about UNHCR's Return to Afghanistan programme visit www.unhcr.org/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/afghan

UNHCR would like to thank UNA Church Stretton for its generous support and valuable contribution through the Afghanistan Livelihood Project, and would welcome similar partnerships with other UNA branches. Interested? Then e-mail gbirloea@unhcr.org or telephone Karen Wagstaff on 020 7759 8090.





Campaigning for MDG 1:

Fighting Hunger with Your Feet

Arlene Mitchell, Director, Walk the World Division, World Food Programme

Every journey starts with a single step and the United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) is working to ensure that 2006 sees a significant step towards the UN Millennium Development Goal of halving the proportion of people who suffer from hunger by 2015.

This spring will see WFP throw its considerable weight behind a global event designed to raise awareness about child hunger and to inject momentum into a movement designed to make real

progress towards reducing the numbers of hungry people.

The event, 'Walk the World', involves a chain of walks stretching from New Zealand to Hawaii, each taking place in adjacent timezones on Sunday, 21 May. The aim is to create a 'virtual' ring of one million walkers around the globe, with each participant pledging their support to fight child hunger.

The rationale behind the walk is crushingly simple: despite solemn commitments by world leaders to address hunger through Millennium

Development Goal number 1, the number of hungry people around the world is still growing. Walk the World aims to re-energise efforts to address this global problem by focusing on the plight of hungry children.

Eliminating child hunger is key to achieving MDG 1. Of the 852 million people who suffer from chronic hunger around the world, 300 million are children. If their needs can be addressed, then the Millennium Development Goal of halving global hunger will have effectively been reached.



Photos in this section © WFP/Photo Library



- Every five seconds a child dies because she or he is hungry.
- There are an estimated 300 million hungry children in the world. If their needs could be addressed we could make a significant step towards halving the number of hungry in the world by 2015.
- For just 11 pence a day, you can feed a hungry child in school (WFP School Feeding Programme).
- Research shows that free school lunches can increase attendance by 100% and boost performance.
- Six million children under the age of five die every year from hunger.
- Hunger is inherited. Each year, 17 million children are born underweight because their parents are malnourished.
- Child mortality rates are eight times higher in Africa than Europe. Malnutrition is the main cause.

WFP accepts that to reach this noble goal it will need the support of a wider group that includes the UN family, governments, citizens and non-governmental organisations. The idea is to create a mass movement for the greater good that will meet once a year to walk and to convince world leaders, communities and ordinary people that child hunger is no longer acceptable. Through this mobilisation it is hoped that policy-makers will focus more of their resources and efforts on ending child hunger.

In the UK, Walk the World will take place in Regent's Park in central London, where plans are already in place for a five-kilometre walk, starting at 11 am on 21 May. (However, you do not need to be in London to participate: you can walk wherever you are.) The London walk is open to anyone who supports the aims of the event. While participants will be welcome to turn up on the day, WFP is encouraging people to register online via a special website that has been set up to promote the aims and objectives of Walk the World (www.fighthunger.org).

While the main purpose of the walk is to raise awareness, it will also be an opportunity to raise funds. UNA walkers can either donate proceeds entirely to WFP or split these equally between WFP and the UNA Trust, in support of the Trust's educational work. Sponsorship forms are available on the UNA website on www.una.org.uk. For more information on Walk the World contact the UK's Walk the World coordinator, Bideesha Ahuja, on 020 7240 9001 or bideesha.ahuja@wfp.org





Campaigning for MDG 8: **Cancel** Unjust and Unpayable Poor Country **Debts**

Trisha Rogers is the Director of the Jubilee Debt Campaign and a member of the Westminster branch of UNA.

"The practical solutions exist ... The cost is utterly affordable. All that is needed is action."

Report of the Millennium Project to the UN Secretary-General, 2005

Debt and the Millennium Development Goals

In 2000, under the auspices of the United Nations, world leaders agreed on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) to halve world poverty by 2015. They recognised that it is unacceptable to have more than 2 billion people living on less than \$2 per day, and 30,000 children dying daily from preventable causes. Extreme poverty is the slavery of our time; every day it means billions of lives are lost or blighted unnecessarily.

But, on current trends, it will take us more than 100 years to achieve the MDGs. Inadequate finances and inappropriate policies are two of the main obstacles blocking the way; debt relief could play an important role in surmounting both. As the Commission for Africa pointed out, debt relief deliv-

ers "flexible, long-term, untied, predictable and on-budget resources", while debt servicing is "basically negative aid" and is linked statistically to low private investment and high levels of capital flight – factors hardly conducive to poverty reduction. However, debt cancellation will not be enough: we need, too, more and better aid along with a fairer global trading system.

Debt Cancellation Initiatives

In 1996 the World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF) introduced the Heavily Indebted Poor Country (HIPC) initiative to reduce the debts of countries meeting certain criteria. In 1999, because so few countries actually qualified under HIPC, the process was modified, but left with the same structure, tied to economic ratios rather than poverty needs, and linked to damaging policy conditions. Creditors retained their power; and still debts – and poverty – increased.

As a result of intense campaigning in 2005, world

leaders – at the G8, the World Bank and IMF – promised, for the first time, that certain multilateral debts should be cancelled in full. This was a major change in philosophy, recognising that some countries, in order to have any hope of reaching the MDGs, must have 100% of their historic debts to certain multilateral lenders, as well as to individual governments, cancelled. The contribution of campaigners to this important shift in outlook was acknowledged by Gordon Brown and Hilary Benn who in May 2005 wrote, "Because of your tireless efforts, debt relief has been provided to 27 countries and led to increases in spending on health, education and poverty reduction."

The G8 agreed to cancel the debts owed to the IMF, the World Bank and the African Development Bank by those countries which had completed the laborious HIPC qualification process. Currently there are about 38 countries that might be considered under HIPC. In January 2006 the IMF part of the G8 deal was imple-

Jubilee Debt Campaign

In the 80s and 90s a global movement spearheaded by Jubilee 2000 argued that unpayable debts of poor countries were unjust, caused horrific suffering and should be canceled. At first, world leaders dismissed the idea, saying debt cancellation would destroy the international financial system. But, thanks to the persistence of debt campaigners, the principle became more widely accepted and attention turned to the details.

Formed in 2001 as the successor to

Jubilee 2000, the Jubilee Debt Campaign is part of an international movement demanding an end to the injustice of poor country debt and to the scandal of extreme poverty. In 2005 the Jubilee Debt Campaign was delighted to welcome UNA-UK as one of its 200 members. Our membership includes national organisations as well as local groups, so local UNA branches would be very welcome to join too (the suggested subscription is optional). Individuals can register to receive information and take part in actions and events.

The Jubilee Debt Campaign's next major event is its (free!) conference in London on 8 April 2006. The conference will feature presentations, workshops and discussions, with contributions from, among others, Susan George (author of *A Fate Worse than Debt*); Lidy Nacpil (Co-ordinator of Jubilee South); and Mark Plant (Senior Adviser at the International Monetary Fund). There will be UNA-UK material available and we hope many UNA-UK members will attend, to learn more about the issues and support the campaign [see opposite page].



mented for 17 of these. The World Bank and African Development Bank aspects are yet to be finalised, and it is important that campaigners keep up the pressure to ensure that the commitments made are delivered in full.

Corruption and Odious Debts

There is ample evidence to show that debt cancellation is an effective way to get money where it is needed. Tanzania and Uganda, for instance, have set up separate funds to channel money freed by debt relief towards poverty reduction. Mozambique has introduced a free immunisation programme for children. Thanks to debt relief, school fees for primary education have been abolished in Uganda, Malawi, Zambia and Tanzania. There is no evidence to suggest that debt cancellation is being used to fuel military expenditures.

A number of poor countries do have problems with corruption – or have had in the past. There need to be measures in place to ensure that money is

accounted for openly, so that the people in that country can see what is happening to the money and be sure it will benefit them. Where possible, this should be done by strengthening local monitoring initiatives. The danger is that this call for 'accountability' will be used to make poor country governments more accountable to outsiders, such as in the World Bank, rather than to their own citizens. This undermines democracy and becomes an excuse to impose harmful economic policy conditions. This is not the same as preventing corruption, and must end.

In the contraction of debts, the responsibilities of both lender and borrower need to be recognised. For example, if loans are given to dishonest governments or for useless projects, it is not appropriate that, decades later, people should forego education and health care in order to pay these loans. An example of this comes from Bataan in the Philippines where, in 1984, loans amounting to \$2.3 billion were secured, with the advice of international consultants,

from foreign banks and governments. These funds were used to build a nuclear power plant. It was subsequently discovered that the plant had been situated near a volcano in an earthquake zone, and the plant was judged unusable. The plant has never generated any electricity, but the Philippines, with one tenth of its children suffering from malnutrition, is still paying \$150,000 per day on servicing this debt.

Debts like this, and some debts incurred by oppressive regimes, must be branded 'odious' and written off. We need an open, just and impartial arbitration process to judge which debts countries cannot or should not pay. Several governments are pushing for such a process to be established under the auspices of the Financing for Development Office of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs at the United Nations; we urge the UK government to support this activity to develop fair and transparent debt resolution processes.

Nigeria

Many think that, because of its oil revenues, Nigeria is a rich country. In fact it one of the 20 poorest countries in the world, with 80 million Nigerians living on less than \$1 a day, and its oil revenues amount to 50 cents per day per person. Nigeria is also a very indebted country, accounting in 2003 for \$1.6 billion of sub-Saharan Africa's total debt service of \$8.6 billion. Despite its poverty and its indebtedness, Nigeria was previously considered ineligible for the HIPC process – officially because of the technicality of having had some loans from a non-concessionary part of the World Bank. Many suspect, however, that the reason for Nigeria's exclusion was that its debts were so large.

Nigeria has in the past been notorious for its corruption. Encouragingly, the current government appears committed to tackling this problem and the poverty with which corruption is associ-



DEBT
AND
POWER

- Towards an End of Debt
Domination

Jubilee Debt Campaign conference 2006

11am – 5pm
Saturday, 8 April 2006

South Camden Community School
London NW1 1RG

Booking essential
Please e-mail
events@jubileedebtcampaign.org.uk
or call 020 7324 4729



ated. Both the UK government and the World Bank have praised the government for its efforts in this area.

At the 2005 meeting of the G8, proposals were agreed to tackle Nigeria's debts, owed primarily to members of the so-called 'Paris Club' of major creditor countries. (Another major debtor to the Paris Club had been Iraq; but in November 2004 the Club agreed to cancel 80% of Iraq's total debt of \$39 billion, leaving the other 20% to be paid off over 23 years.) Nigeria had in fact already repaid the \$18 billion principal of the original loan but, because it had not always made its payments on time, the Paris Club debt had built up through fines and interest on arrears to a colossal sum in excess of \$30 billion. It is unknown what the original loans were for, but the Jubilee Debt Campaign contends that the resultant debts were odious, incurred through 'Cold War loans' which provided little or no benefit to the poorest people in the country.

The Paris Club agreement involved cancelling \$18 billion, or 60%, of Nigeria's debt. Nigeria agreed to pay the remaining \$12 billion between October 2005 and April 2006. Of this, the UK, the single biggest creditor, is due to receive \$3 billion (£1.7 billion) – twice as much as DfID gave to Africa in 2005. This repayment had not been expected, and the UK government had in fact made a loss provision for it in its accounts. In light of this, and in keeping with the UK government's advocacy of 100% debt cancellation, we are urging it to return to Nigeria this huge sum of money so that these funds can be spent on education, health care and infrastructure.

Conditionality

In 2005 the G8 recognised the principle that governments should not have economic poli-

cies forced on them as a condition of aid or debt relief. The G8 communiqué stated, "It is up to developing countries themselves and their governments to take the lead on development. They need to decide, plan and sequence their economic policies to fit with their own development strategies, for which they should be accountable to all their people."

However, debt cancellation currently comes with harmful economic policy strings attached. If governments do not comply, cancellation is delayed or withheld. If they do – often in the face of opposition from their people and their parliaments – it all too often comes at a disastrous price. The strings attached to debt relief have benefited countries and rich companies in the North, but all too often they strangle the poorest.

The World Bank and IMF still claim that conditionality, on debt relief or aid, fosters economic growth and poverty reduction. These institutions have a rigid view of 'the right way' to do things – including shrinking the state, opening markets, keeping public spending low – and rule out alternatives, whatever the evidence. Conditionality can also be hugely profitable for the economies of the North. Privatisation contracts in Africa, for instance, generate profits for companies and consultants from rich countries. Trade liberalisation – enforced through conditions on aid and debt relief – has enriched the North but cost sub-Saharan Africa more than \$270 billion over the last 20 years.

It is vital that funds released through debt cancellation are monitored and that benefiting governments are accountable to their own people for how they spend their money. The key to this is transparency, not external con-

trol of economic policy. Monitoring schemes can track the allocation of debt relief to public spending, and governments should be strongly encouraged to open their budgets to scrutiny. The UK's recent ratification of the UN Convention on Corruption will help to ensure that UK companies are no longer complicit in money going astray. Initiatives such as these, which do not exact harmful concessions out of governments and their people, can ensure the transparent and effective allocation of funds without undermining accountability and democracy.

The UK government said in 2005 that it is "inappropriate and ineffective for donors to impose policies" and pledged not to attach economic policy conditions to its aid. Despite the clarity of this statement and its corroboration by the G8, international debt relief schemes – which the UK and other G8 countries support – still involve conditionality. For example, the UK determines whether or not to offer unilateral debt relief by using a World Bank instrument – a Poverty Reduction Support Credit – which makes relief contingent upon economic policy changes such as privatisation.

Where Next

We have made enormous progress since the 80s and 90s. But it is not enough. First, we need to make sure that the 2005 promises are delivered and that anomalies, such as Nigeria's debt repayment, are rectified. Second, we need to do more: the commitments made in 2005 will provide only about one tenth of the debt relief needed for countries to achieve the MDGs, and it is unclear how conditionality will be stopped. What is urgently required is more debt cancellation without conditionality, and an international arbitration mechanism to resolve disputes over debt and assess the legitimacy of debts, with a view not to 'balancing the books', or enriching private companies from the North, but to bringing people out of poverty. Only then will we have a chance of making poverty history.

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



Sir Hans Singer development economist of vision and international commitment 1910 – 2006

This is an extract from Sir Richard Jolly's obituary of Sir Hans Singer for The Guardian. In the 1970s Sir Richard was co-leader with Hans Singer of the ILO mission to Kenya. He is also the former chair of UNA-UK. The full obituary has been posted on UNA-UK's website.

With the death of Sir Hans Singer on 26 February 2006, the world lost one of its most eminent development economists. No economist of the 20th century was as persistent in focusing on the problems of developing countries nor so creative in exploring what could be done to accelerate their development.

This extraordinary vision and energy issued from a small man, of modest appearance and mild-mannered stance, head often cocked to one side, bushy eyebrows with a friendly but questioning smile. He was loved and deservedly feted by many for his visionary and creative thinking, which was bold, innovative and positive in contrast to his unassuming style.

Singer was born in the German Rhineland in 1910. At the University of Bonn, his early brilliance brought him to the attention of the world-renowned economist Josef Schumpeter. In 1933, when Singer had to flee Nazi Germany,

Schumpeter wrote to John Maynard Keynes in Cambridge. Singer subsequently became the fourth student to obtain his doctorate under Keynes's supervision.

Despite these eminent contacts and the fact that he had come to Britain for refuge, Singer was interned for about six weeks in the early months of the second World War, until released following the personal intervention of Keynes. These events had a life-long impact on Singer's work and thinking and instilled in him an understanding of what it meant to be marginalised: as a Jew in a Catholic area of Protestant Germany and later a refugee in Britain, Singer was a minority in a minority in a minority.

Singer was one of the first economists to be employed by the United Nations, joining the UN Economic Affairs Department early in 1947. He rapidly became the UN's working economist of choice. Undoubtedly, Singer's best-known work was on the declining terms of trade experienced by developing countries. Generally referred to as the Prebisch-Singer thesis, we now know that the original analysis underlying this important work ought in fact to be attributed to Singer himself. At the time, when Keynesian preoccupations were directing most attention to short-

term fluctuations in commodity prices, Singer's work attracted both attention and controversy but, today, more than fifty years later, dominant professional opinion has shifted in Singer's favour. Much of the action which Singer recommended, however, has not been taken, with the result that countries still dependent on exports of coffee, cotton and other primary commodities continue to lose out.

Singer left the UN in 1969 to become one of the first fellows of the newly-founded Institute of Development Studies at the University of Sussex. At IDS, his prodigious output continued, but he was now able to publish under his own name, not anonymously under a UN institutional label. Singer was awarded six honorary degrees and was knighted in 1994 for 'services to economic issues'.

Singer's career, which covered a remarkable 70 years, stretched from 1936, when he received his doctorate at Cambridge under Keynes, to November 2005, when he gave his last lecture, a week short of his 95th birthday. At this lecture, Singer spoke without notes and without hesitation, his memory and intellect undimmed and his unwavering commitment to internationalism evident to all. He is survived by a son Stephen, a daughter-in-law, Odile, and two grandchildren, Lucia and Joanna.

Hans W. Singer, development economist, born 29 November 1910, died 26 February 2006

Edna Southern: "The life of Stockport UNA" 1923-2005

It is with deep regret that we report the death of Mrs Edna Southern. Edna became a life member of Stockport UNA in 1948 and played an active role in the work and affairs of the branch, notably as its secretary and treasurer. She was personally responsible for the branch's street collections and, as a

committed member of its committee, she greatly contributed to the efficiency and smooth running of the group. She can be said to have been the life of Stockport UNA.

A devoted churchgoer, Edna lived her faith, and saw UNA as being complementary to it. She was an interna-

tionalist. Retirement came in recent years as a result of failing health but, on a happy note, just before her death she and her husband Leslie received a letter from the Queen to mark their diamond wedding jubilee.

Members and friends will greatly miss Edna.



UNA BRANCH PROFILE

Welcome to West London!

Djandark Wali is both the new Chair of West London UNA and UNYSA's Assistant Campaigns Officer.

The newly-elected West London UNA committee is full of vigour. The Chair, Secretary and Treasurer are now all under 26. Drawing on our strong links with Brunel University UNYSA, we hope to infuse the branch with our youthful enthusiasm over the coming years.

West London has been quick to get off the ground, and our committee's first event was a daunting one for beginners: hosting the London and South East Region Spring Council on 11 March 2006.

After a delicious international lunch, the Dhad Production got the day off to a rousing start with African drumming.

The theme of the event was 'Gender Matters and Fair Trade' and featured the following exciting programme of speakers:

- 'Barriers to Women in Business and Trade' (Juliet Colman, President of UNIFEM-UK)
- 'The Realities of Female Genital Mutilation' (Margaret Sesay and Dr Jenny Loudon)
- 'Domestic Violence and Killing in the Name of Honour' (Baroness Scotland QC)
- 'Advantages for All or Just for the Rich Nations' (HE Nick Thorne CMG, UK Ambassador to the UN in Geneva)
- 'Where is the Gender Dimension in Trade Policy? The Impact of International Trade on Women' (Katherine Ronderos, UNA-UK representative to UNIFEM-UK)

Discussions continued throughout the afternoon and received very positive reactions from the audience, one member of whom – Stephen Pound, Labour MP for Ealing North – was so impressed he joined UNA on the spot!

We hope to have more successful events like this one in the future, and are extremely grateful for the help and guidance provided by the outgoing committee.



Harold Stern receives an award in recognition of his long and remarkable service to the West London branch.





ANNOUNCEMENTS

Expert Advisory Panel

The UNA-UK Policy Committee is in the process of identifying individuals with expertise on the work of the United Nations, both academics and those who have worked for the United Nations or for related think tanks and NGOs. From this pool the Committee will then draw up a shortlist of distinguished individuals willing to provide *ad hoc* expert advice to the Committee through 'virtual' means – i.e. by e-mail and telephone – on how best UNA-UK can take forward the policy priorities established by Annual Conference. If you have suggestions on leading experts who should be considered for inclusion in such a panel, please e-mail policy@una.org.uk

The latest addition to the UN APPG

UNA-UK is delighted that Sir Patrick Cormack MP has joined the All-Party Parliamentary Group on the United Nations, for which UNA-UK acts as the secretariat. Sir Patrick, with Jeremy Thorpe, chaired the committee which organised the excellent Service of Rededication to the UN at St Paul's Cathedral on UN Day in 2005.

Additional information about photographs in UN60 supplement

UNA-UK is most grateful to Harold Stern for allowing UNA-UK use of some of his photographs for the 60th anniversary supplement to the January to March 2006 issue of *New World*. Not all of his photographs on page 15 were accompanied by a caption acknowledging his copyright, and we are pleased to do this now. We also include some additional information about these photographs provided by Harold which will be of interest to UNA members. Harold reports that the individual appearing in the photograph on page 15 entitled 'Participant at UNA Annual Conference' is Cissa wa Numbe Gaston, a founder and former Secretary-General of Zaire UNA. Cissa sought and was granted asylum in this country and, at the time of the conference, was trying to get his family out of Zaire to join him. He eventually succeeded. The picture of Rashid Kareh OBE and Mike Gapes MP was taken in Westminster at a party to celebrate the fact that UK had rejoined UNESCO, a cause in which Rashid was very active. Harold also took the photograph of former UNA-UK Director Malcolm Harper.

Southern Counties Region Algar Reed Bursary Fund

The family of Algar Reed has expressed approval that it would be fitting to use the legacy, bequeathed to the Southern Counties Region in his will, towards this fund, as suggested by the Southern Counties Regional Council.

Southern Counties Region is now inviting all who knew and worked with Algar to promote the United Nations to contribute to this fund, which, it is suggested, will be primarily used to enable young people to attend UNA-UK conferences and/or study tours.

Notice of Algar's death appeared on the UNA-UK website and a tribute to his life has been produced. Southern Counties Region would welcome any recollections of Algar's very active life, and of his work with other organisations and his church, which, it is hoped, can be included in a memorial book.

Please make cheques payable to UNA Southern Counties Region, mark them on the reverse 'Algar Reed Bursary Fund', and send them to:

Graeme Panting
5 Chapel Street
Thatcham
RG18 4JP
Tel 01635 863 331

or

Ruth Barker
18 Cedar Close
Bagshot
Surrey GU19 5AD
Tel 01276 475 429

Goodbye Ed and thank you!

By the time you read this, Ed Brenton, UNA's membership services officer, will have begun a new job as administrator of the Crime and Society Foundation. Ed has made an invaluable contribution to systematising UNA's membership databases and procedures during his two years at UNA, and has been a friendly and welcoming voice for UNA members. UNA-UK wishes Ed every success in his challenging new role. Whilst we introduce new arrangements to service members please continue to use membership@una.org.uk for membership-related enquiries or leave a message on 020 7766 3443.



UNA-UK IN 2006

Key International Dates and Events 2006

7 Apr	World Health Day , with a focus on health workers
21-23 Apr	UNA-UK and UNYSA Annual Conference to be held at Durham University in the north of England
1-12 May	The Commission on Sustainable Development to meet
1-19 May	The Committee on Economic, Cultural and Social Rights to meet for its 36th session at the UN in Geneva. The Committee against Torture to meet simultaneously, also in Geneva, and also for its 36th session
22 May	International day for Biological Diversity
29 May	International Day of UN Peacekeepers
5 Jun	World Environment Day , with the theme 'deserts and desertification'
20 Jun	World Refugee Day , focusing this year on 'hope'
26 Jun	International Day in Support of Victims of Torture
Jul	G8 Summit in St Petersburg, Russia, with a focus on education and energy security
11 Jul	World Population Day
12 Aug	International Youth Day
13-18 Aug	International AIDS Conference to be held in Toronto, Canada
21 Sep	International Day of Peace
2 Oct	World Habitat Day
16 Oct	World Food Day
17 Oct	International Day for the Eradication of Poverty
24 Oct	United Nations Day , to mark the date on which the UN Charter came into force in 1945
15-18 Nov	12th International Conference Anti-Corruption Conference , to be held in Guatemala City and Antigua
25 Nov	International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women
1 Dec	World AIDS Day
9 Dec	International Anti-Corruption Day
10 Dec	Human Rights Day
31 Dec	Official end of Kofi Annan's second term as UN Secretary-General

Talk by United States Ambassador Shirin Tahir-Kheli

On Friday, 10 March 2006 UNA-UK hosted a talk at the Foreign Press Association by US Ambassador Shirin Tahir-Kheli on the subject of UN Reform.

Ambassador Tahir-Kheli was appointed by Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice to serve as her senior adviser and chief interlocutor on United Nations reform. After delivering a wide-ranging address on the United States vision of UN reform, Ambassador Tahir-Kheli answered a number of questions, under the Chatham House Rule, from the assembled audience of diplomats, journalists and UNA members.

Bexley UNA

Andy Darmoo, a member of Bexley UNA, hosted a meeting at his factory, 'Fantastic Lighting', on 6 February. The branch Chair, George Palmer, reported on his humanitarian mission with Sylvia Blyden to Sierra Leone in December 2005 and on plans for his second mission in March 2006. Among the guests were Dr Frank Kosia, Head of Radiology and Nuclear Medicine at Connaught General Hospital, Freetown, Sierra Leone; Sylvia Blyden, member of Lewisham UNA (former Secretary-General of Sierra Leone UNA); and Dr Gill Mackilligin, coordinator of Working Partners, a national affiliate of UNA-UK.



Photo © Gill Mackilligin, 2006

UNA Eastern and Southeast Regional Conference Saturday, 10 June 2006

Rothamsted Conference Centre, Rothamsted Research Institute, Harpenden, Hertfordshire AL5 2JQ

Poverty Reduction and Environmental Sustainability Can we achieve both of these UN Millennium Development Goals?

Expert speakers will explore progress being made on the UN Millennium Development Goals for poverty reduction (Goal 1) and ensuring environmental sustainability (Goal 7).

Delegate fee of £15 covers registration, conference papers, refreshments and lunch.

For a booking form, please contact:

Trevor Evans, Harpenden branch

01582 713 895, jandt.evans@ntlworld.com

Bruce Robertson, London Region RDO

020 8983 4215, bruce@prexie.com

Michael Sutton, St Albans branch

01727 765 794, michael.sutton3@ntlworld.com



Future Events and Activities

This list of events is not exhaustive. To be added to our regular e-mail bulletin of upcoming events, write to membership@una.org.uk

Purley with Sutton

On Saturday, 1 April at 11am Carlo Taczalski will speak about his 6-month visit to China at the Caterham URC Hall, Harestone Valley Road. Please ring John Chitty on 020 8668 3337 for more information.

Saffron Walden

The branch is running a bric-a-brac stall outside Boots in the Market Place from 9.30am to 12pm on Saturday, 8 April. Please e-mail Francis Deutsch at francis.deutsch@ntlworld.com to find out more.

Southampton

On Saturday, 8 April at 12pm Gavin Barker, Community Outreach Manager at Southampton City Council, will discuss the draft Charter of Citizenship which aims to promote cooperation and sustainability in the community. The meeting will take place at the Edmund Kell Unitarian Church, Bellevue Road, Southampton and there is an optional light lunch for £2.50. E-mail Margaret Matthews on memat56@aol.com for details.

London & South East Region

At 7pm on Wednesday, 12 April 2006, there will be a social for the London and South East Region UNA at the Thai Pavilion East (opposite Imperial War Museum). We will be wishing 'bon voyage' to Sarah MacDougall, Secretary, West London UNA, who is departing to undertake 3 months' *pro bono* legal work on 'death row' cases in the United States. There will also be a 'welcome back' to George Palmer, Chair of Bexley UNA, from his second humanitarian aid

mission to Sierra Leone. All members and prospective members welcome. For more information, please e-mail Sarah at lady_mac@talk21.com

Norwich

A lunchbox meeting at the Friends Meeting House, Upper Goat Lane will be held on 21 April at 12.15pm. There will be a talk by Andy Hewett (British Red Cross) on asylum in Norwich. Please bring sandwiches – hot drinks and biscuits will be served from 12.15pm which is included in the price of £2. For more information please e-mail David Roberts at david@norwich-uk.freemove.co.uk

Shipley & Baildon

The branch AGM will be held on Monday, 24 April at 7.30pm at St John's Church Hall, Baildon with Caroline Skelton speaking on fair trade and her visit to India. For more information please e-mail Thelma de Leeuw at tdel@globalnet.co.uk

Mid-Cornwall

On Wednesday, 26 April at 7.30pm there will be a talk by Noel Harrower on child soldiers in northern Uganda. The event will be held at 7 Southpark Road, Tywardreath, Par. For more information please e-mail joymcmullen@onetel.com

South Lakeland & Lancaster City

On Tuesday, 28 April from 10am to 12pm there will be a UNICEF coffee morning at the Parish Church Hall, Kents Bank Road. Please phone Luckshan Abey Suriya on 01539 532 961 for more information.

Bexhill & Hastings

On Saturday, 29 April there will be a talk by Norman Baker, Liberal Democrat MP, on the United Nations and the environment. Details of timing and the venue are available

from Allan Bula. Please e-mail him at allanbula@talk21.com

Lymington

On 29 April from 9.30am to 12.30pm there will be a display of UN and UNA materials including quizzes and games outside St Thomas Church on Lymington High Street. Please e-mail Peter Anson at peter.anson3@btinternet.com for more information.

On 25 April at 7pm there will be a talk at Lymington Community Centre by Jenny Edwards of Communication & Action on growing peace in our world. For more information please e-mail peter.anson3@btinternet.com

Tunbridge Wells

Patricia Rogers will speak on the Jubilee Debt Campaign and making poverty history at 8pm on Monday, 8 May. The meeting will take place at the Friends Meeting House, Grosvenor Park. Entry is free and refreshments are provided. Please e-mail Alan Bullion at alan.bullion@informa.com for details.

Sheffield

On 9 May at 6.30pm there will be a talk by David Luwum on the situation concerning the Lord's Resistance Army in Uganda. The meeting takes place at the Quaker Meeting House, Room 1. Please contact Fred St Leger for more information on 01142 303 288.

Reading

Karl Miller of the Arms Reduction Coalition will be addressing a branch meeting on 19 April. His subject is 'Disarmament for Development'. For more information, please contact sidamparam@supanet.com



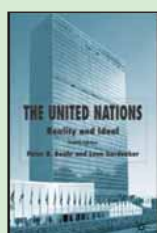
RESOURCES

Recent books on the UN



Swords into Plowshares: Building Peace Through the United Nations

Roy S. Lee (ed.)
Brill, January 2006



United Nations: Reality and Ideal

Peter R. Baehr and Leon Gordenker
Palgrave, August 2005



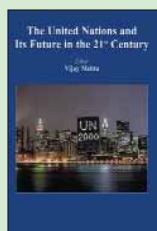
Social Justice in an Open World: The Role of the United Nations

UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs, March 2006



GEO Year Book 2006

UNEP, January 2006



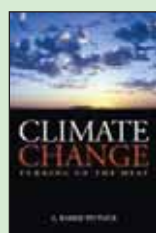
The United Nations and Its Future in the 21st Century

Vijay Mehta (ed.)
Spokesman Books, 2006



State of the World 2006

Worldwatch Institute
Earthscan, December 2005



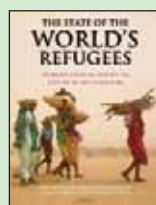
Climate Change: Turning up the Heat

A. Barrie Pittock
Earthscan, December 2005



Not in Our Name: Democracy and Foreign Policy in the UK

Simon Burall, Brendan Donnelly and Stuart Weir
Politico's Publishing, January 2006



The State of the World's Refugees: Human Displacement in the New Millennium

UNHCR
Oxford University Press, March 2006



Preparing for Peace: By Asking the Experts to Analyse War

Westmoreland General Meeting, 2006

60 Years of UNA by Frank Field

We are pleased to announce the publication of the full version of former UNA Director Frank Field's 60th anniversary report of UNA's history, which formed the basis for UNA's 60th anniversary special supplement in the January-March issue of *New World*. The report is available on UNA's website and in hard copy from head office. Please contact Matt Ripley on 020 7766 3459 for more information.



New UN System Websites

UN in General

- New High-Level Panel on UN System-Wide Coherence in Areas of Development, Humanitarian Assistance and the Environment
www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2006/sgsm10349.doc.htm
- UN in Brief
(updated version)
www.un.org/Docs/uninbrief/index.html

Peace & Security

- Gender and UN Peacekeeping
www.un.org/Depts/dpko/gender/index.htm
- United Nations Political and Peacebuilding Missions (Background Note: 31 January 2006)
www.un.org/peace/ppbm.pdf
- United Nations Peacekeeping Operations (Background Note: 31 January 2006)
www.un.org/Depts/dpko/dpko/bnote.htm

Economic & Social Development

- GEO Year Book 2006
www.unep.org/geo/yearbook/yb2006/
The GEO Year Book 2006 is the third annual survey of the changing global environment produced by the United Nations Environment Programme, in collaboration with many world experts in environmental research and action.
- ILO Annual Global Employment Trends
www.ilo.org/public/english/employment/strat/download/getb06en.pdf
- World Health Day 2006 [observed 7 April 2006]
Working together for health
www.who.int/world-health-day/2006/en/index.html
- World Environment Day 2006 [observed 5 June 2006]
Deserts and Desertification: Don't Desert Drylands!
www.unep.org/wed/2006/english/

Improvements to UNA-UK's website

Many of you will have seen the recent changes to the UNA-UK website, www.una.org.uk. As well as the new-look homepage, there are now more comprehensive resource pages on the Millennium Development Goals, peace and security, trade justice and the All-Party Parliamentary Group on the UN. Future planned additions include profiles of candidates for the next Secretary-General and an interactive map of the UNA-UK network. We have also posted a new event calendar and UNA-UK Locator. If your branch has a website that has not yet been listed, or if you have any other comments on the continuing redesign of the website, please e-mail website@una.org.uk.

The development of the UN human rights treaty body system

On 19 November 2006, UNA-UK hosted a high-level seminar on the strengthening of the United Nations human rights treaty body system. The seminar, held at Lancaster House and sponsored by the FCO's human rights department, brought together the UK's leading human rights experts with senior government decision-makers and high-level representatives of the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights. FCO Minister Lord Triesman participated, as did Cherie Booth QC. UNA-UK was represented by members of UNA-UK's Policy Committee having specific expertise in human rights.

UNA-UK will shortly be publishing a document setting out the key recommendations from this meeting. This short paper will be posted on UNA's website (www.una.org.uk) but will also be available in hard copy. Please call Veronica Lie on 020 7766 3451 for further details.



YOUNG PROFESSIONALS NETWORK

OF THE UNITED NATIONS ASSOCIATION

Ambition with a Conscience

Young professionals for peace, justice & sustainable development

Tim Jarman is a member of the UNA-UK Board and the YPN Steering Committee.

The Young Professionals Network (YPN) brings together a diverse mix of young professionals in their 20s and 30s who support a strong role for the UN in international affairs. The Network provides opportunities for like-minded young professionals to meet each other and to engage with politicians and influential members of the business community. YPN members also receive exclusive invitations to seminars featuring high-level representatives of the United Nations speaking on a diverse range of subjects including sustainable development, peace and security, human rights, and the role of business in helping the UN deliver gains across these areas.

The YPN launch event, held on 19 January 2006, took place on the riverside terrace of the House of Commons in Westminster, London. It was hosted by Hugh Robertson MP, Chair of the All-Party Parliamentary Group on the UN.

With the event heavily over-subscribed, it was no surprise that there was an excellent turn-out, with well over 150 young professionals in attendance, along with MPs, business leaders and staff members of the UN family of agencies based in London.

Following Hugh Robertson's welcome, addresses were made by Anthony Sampson (Chair of the Global Compact UK Network); Kate Grady and Lin Yan (YPN Steering Committee); and Sam Daws (Executive Director, UNA-UK).

All those in attendance who joined UNA-UK were offered guaranteed seats at Kofi Annan's speech on 31 January. January subsequently saw UNA-UK's membership grow by the highest monthly increase on record.

The YPN Steering Committee is in the process of expanding, to make sure that the ideas stay fresh. The Committee is also formulating an exciting programme of speaker events and socials. Details will be included in every issue of *New World* and posted on www.una.org.uk/ypn, where you can sign up to the YPN e-mail list to receive regular updates on the Network and its activities.

For further information on the YPN launch event, together with more photos from the evening and details of the opening addresses, please visit: www.una.org.uk/ypn



The Launch of the UNA-UK Young Professionals Network

House of Commons Terrace, 19 January 2006



Photos © UNA-UK/Benedict Parsons, 2006



UNYSA Annual Conference 2006

Photo © UNA-UK/Benedict Parsons, 2005



Following these workshops, conference delegates will have the opportunity to attend a lecture by Shashi Tharoor, United Nations Under-Secretary-General for Communications and Public Information, at Durham Cathedral (see page 4).

Further information is available on the web at www.una.org.uk/unysa where you will also find the Annual Conference registration form.

We look forward to seeing you at UNYSA Annual Conference 2006!

UNYSA's 2006 Annual Conference is to be held at Durham University on Saturday, 22 April – in conjunction with UNA-UK. The day will represent a culmination of another busy year for UNYSA, and will give you the opportunity to catch up on what other branches have been up to, to attend informative talks and workshops, to discuss the future of UNYSA, and to stand for election to the Youth Assembly and Youth Council.

The conference will run from 10am until 5.30pm and we will have sessions on:

- Stop AIDS
- Debt relief/trade justice
- Careers in the UN and in organisations sharing similar objectives
- Human rights in the Sudan
- Joining the Youth Assembly and Youth Council

Youth Council and Youth Assembly 2006-7

At every UNYSA Annual Conference we hold elections for the upcoming year's Youth Council. The positions to be filled are:

- President
- Vice-President
- Treasurer
- Secretary
- Model UN Officer
- Campaigns Officer
- Communications/Press Officer
- Technical Officer
- Individual Members Officer
- Membership Officer

If elected to one of these positions you will help run UNYSA for the coming year – building on its successes so far and helping to shape its future. If you would like more information about what each of these roles entails please contact Marina Faggionato on vice-president@unysa-uk.org



Mr Secretary-General....?

Marina Faggionato is Vice-President of the Youth Council and a member of the Westminster branch. Marina was one of three young people who, following the speech by UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan at Central Hall Westminster on 31 January 2006, asked him about his time in office and his views on some of the most pressing issues of our time.



UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan chats with UNYSA and YPN members (from left to right) Nadhia Ahmad, Richard Bartlett, Joanna Birch-Phaure and Lin Yan. Photo © UN/Eskinder Debebe, 2006

31 January 2006 saw friends of the United Nations gather at Central Hall Westminster to commemorate the 60th anniversary of the first meeting of the UN General Assembly which took place in the very same venue in January 1946. Following Lord Hannay's opening of the event, and Jack Straw's address (which included reminisces of his student involvement in UNA), Kofi Annan delivered a speech on UN reform to an audience of diplomats, NGO representatives and members of UNA-UK and UNYSA. One of the most notable figures in the audience was undoubtedly Archie Mackenzie, who had been in that same room as a member of the British delegation in 1946 (see page 13).

After the Secretary-General's warm and candid speech, Nadhia Ahmad, Rich Bartlett and I were invited to ask

him some questions. None of us expected the answers we got! Whether it was speaking about the responsibility to protect, or giving his assessment of his record in office, Mr Annan treated the audience to straightforward answers that indicated not only a thorough grasp of the problems facing the United Nations but also his conviction that, given political will, the world can be healed of its ills. In answering us, Mr Annan once again demonstrated his belief in the importance of involving youth in dialogue, and their role in holding political leaders to account.

In the presence of youth members of UNA, Jack Straw and Kofi Annan spoke eloquently about the past and future of the UN – it is up to all of us to make sure that the best visions of the role of the United Nations are those that come to pass.

UNYSA Sheffield: A branch is born

Set up in October 2005, and chaired by Kevin Kittoe, this young branch has made an impressive start. The students have been treated to a series of seminars on new and old threats to international peace and security: Alex Ramsbotham, the head of UNA-UK's Peace and Security Programme, spoke

on 'The UN and Intervention'; Nick Clegg MP on 'The Israeli-Palestine Conflict'; and the Rt Hon. David Blunkett on 'Britain and the UN's Response to Terrorism'.

As part of the University Ethics and the Environment Week the branch also organised 'Love Peace Week' which fea-

tured a well-attended and informative lecture on the arms trade. Another innovative event was a film night, to view and discuss *Hotel Rwanda*. At the moment the branch is also working to develop links with developing countries, particularly Ghana.

We will keep you updated!

United Nations
Secretary-General
Kofi Annan
addresses UNA-UK
to commemorate
the 60th anniversary
of the United Nations
31 January 2006
Central Hall Westminster

