

NEW WORLD

SHIRLEY WILLIAMS

on the new push to rid the world of nuclear weapons

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UNA-UK CLIMATE CHANGE CONFERENCE SERIES 2008-09

- What is the role of the United Nations in finding solutions to climate change and building resilience to its impacts?
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- What can you do as an individual ?

An upcoming series of one-day conferences on climate change, to be held by UNA-UK in 2008-2009 in different cities around the UK, will be tackling these questions. The first conference of the series will be held in Birmingham on Saturday, 7 June 2008. The second will be held in Belfast on Thursday, 6 November 2008. Two further events are being planned for the autumn of 2008 and early 2009 – one in Wales and the other in Scotland.

These one-day conferences are free and open to all, subject to capacity. You can register for the Birmingham and Belfast conferences by signing up at www.una.org.uk/climate, calling 020 7766 3448, or writing to Climate Change, UNA-UK, 3 Whitehall Court, London SW1A 2EL.



UNA-UK is grateful to the Foreign & Commonwealth Office for its financial support for this initiative.

UNA-UK has produced a set of briefings to complement the conference series. These background papers, written by climate change expert Alex Evans, cover these topics:

- Climate change: an introduction
- International climate change architecture
- UK climate change policy
- How climate links to other issues
- What individuals can do

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Letter from the Editor

Can we rid the world of nuclear weapons? Yes, according to the American foreign policy heavyweights who form the so-called Hoover Group. Including the likes of Henry Kissinger, the group has proposed concrete steps for revitalising multi-lateral nuclear disarmament. In this issue's Essay, Shirley Williams calls on political leaders to give the Hoover Group their full support, arguing that 'the potential benefit to humanity...is without comparison'.

High food prices, which are threatening to push up the number of hungry people worldwide, have featured prominently in recent headlines. In Dispatches Jacques Diouf, the head of the UN's Food & Agriculture Organization, explains the origins of the crisis and says how the international community should respond.

Over a million children are victims of trafficking each year. One way you can support action to protect them is to ask your MP to sign EDM 172 on child victims of trafficking. See pages 16-17 for more information.

Veronica Lie, Editor

From the archive – 26 years ago

Let's freeze this winter

SOME 250 people attended the launch of the British Campaign for a nuclear freeze on November 11. The meeting was addressed by David Atwood, a US citizen who explained how the freeze concept had gained some support in the United States, Dame Judith Hart MP, who related it to the British situation and Professor Igor Usachev of the Soviet UN, who said the USSR was sympathetic to a nuclear weapon freeze.



Dame Judith Hart MP

The idea of a freeze was one of the most positive proposals to emerge from the second UN Special Session on Disarmament (UNSSD2). Originally put forward by US peace organisations, it envisaged a freeze by the USA and the USSR on the production, testing and deployment of nuclear weapons and their delivery systems, as well as a halt to the production of weapon-grade fissionable material, as a preliminary to substantial reductions in nuclear weapons.

It would be a first step both towards the elimination of nuclear weapons and towards general disarmament.

During UNSSD2 the freeze became a focal point of lobbying by non-government organisations. It was a major theme of the million strong rally in America in June 12 and was supported by a number of governments—notably Mexico, Sweden and India. Resolutions on a freeze submitted by these countries are now being considered by the 37th regular session of the UN General Assembly.

After UNSSD2, UNA invited a wide range of British peace and development organisations to discuss the possibility of launching a freeze campaign here. This group approved the concept, but decided that the American proposals must be extended to cover the nuclear weapons of all nuclear weapon states. In particular, they stressed that Britain, as well as the two super-powers, should halt its nuclear weapon programme.

All the speakers at the meeting on November 11

pointed out that the freeze is not an end in itself. But it is a necessary first step to nuclear weapon reduction and elimination. The United States and the Soviet Union are currently trying to negotiate reductions in strategic and intermediate range nuclear weapons.

But while these negotiations are going on they are increasing their nuclear arsenals and introducing more sophisticated weapons. In Eastern Europe Cruise and Pershing II missiles are due to be deployed in 1983. The US plans to introduce new strategic nuclear weapons and the USSR will continue with its modernisation programmes.

Britain is to replace its aging Polaris missiles with Trident. All these new systems are likely to be introduced if we do not freeze now.

So far, NATO governments have resisted demands for a freeze. They argue that the Soviet Union is ahead in the nuclear arms race and that the West needs to catch up. They also say that a freeze would not be verifiable.

But different sources give different assessments of the relative strengths of the two super powers. The well respected Stockholm International Peace Research Institute argues that the two sides are pretty evenly balanced.

In any case, as George Kennan, former US Ambassador to Moscow, has pointed out, both sides have such enormous overkill capacity that arguments about which has the statistical edge on the other have no real meaning.

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Shirley Williams revisits Reykjavik and explores new opportunities for disarmament

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'Struck by their idealism ...'
The Foreign Secretary blogs about the Young Professionals Network

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A warm welcome to Rich Nelmes, UNA-UK's new Membership & Fundraising Administration Officer

We are delighted to announce that Rich Nelmes has been appointed to this crucial position at UNA-UK. He brings with him prodigious experience in membership support, administration and development, having worked as Senior Membership Officer at the Evangelical Alliance, and Membership Development Manager at the Institute of Advanced Motorists. In his previous posts, Rich played a key role in streamlining procedures and in developing and implementing strategies to increase membership.

As UNA-UK Membership & Fundraising Administration Officer, Rich will be given ambitious growth and revenue targets. He has also been tasked with overseeing the upgrade of the organisation's database and professionalising our membership administration systems.

Rich is excited about taking on these challenges: 'I look forward to supporting the UNA-UK Board of Directors' new strategic approach to developing UNA-UK's membership and supporter base.'



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The United Nations Association of the UK (UNA-UK) is the UK's leading independent policy authority on the UN and a UK-wide grassroots membership organisation campaigning for a strong, credible and effective United Nations.

Every member of UNA-UK receives a free subscription to *New World*, containing news and comment on the UN. By joining you will also be invited to take part in campaigns and to attend conferences, seminars and other events.

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Gaza situation 'at worst point since 1967'

In a report published in March, a coalition of UK-based NGOs said that the Israeli blockade of Gaza had created the worst humanitarian crisis in the Strip since it was first occupied in 1967. The report argued that the restrictions had both failed to increase Israel's security and precipitated a humanitarian disaster for 1,500,000 Palestinians.

Eighty per cent of families in Gaza rely on humanitarian assistance. Three quarters of the population are recipients of food aid. Unemployment is close to 40 per cent, and most businesses have shut down. Household monthly incomes are shrinking as food prices rise. Almost 2,000 children have dropped out of school this academic year. Hospitals lack power for 8-12 hours per day.

UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon chaired a meeting of the Quartet in London at the beginning of May. The objective of the meeting was to assess progress made in the Middle East peace process since negotiations were launched at Annapolis in November 2007.

UN sets up task force on food crisis

Over the last year the average price of food has shot up by 56 per cent, with wheat rising by 92 per cent and rice – the staple of half the world – by 96 per cent. This sharp escalation, according to the World Food Programme, is threatening to add another 100 million to the number of hungry people around the world. Food riots have occurred in Haiti, Egypt and elsewhere.

To help find short- and longer-term solutions to this crisis, a global task force is being set up under UN auspices. To be chaired by UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, the group will also include the heads of key UN agencies and the World Bank.

The use of agricultural land to produce biofuels is among the factors pushing up prices. In 2007, a fifth of the US's corn crop was used to produce biofuels; the EU is planning to source 10 per cent of its petrol and diesel from biofuels by 2020. British Prime Minister Gordon Brown has pledged to examine the impact of biofuel production on food prices, and if necessary push for a change in EU policy.

UN human rights regime strengthened by new treaty

The UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities entered into force on 3 May, one month after Ecuador became the 20th country to ratify it. It fills an important protection gap in human rights legislation and affects an estimated 650 million people – about 10 per cent of the global population.

The convention affirms for disabled persons the right to education, health, work, adequate living conditions, freedom of movement, freedom from exploitation, and equal recognition before the law. The convention also features an optional protocol allowing for the right to individual petition.

The UK signed the convention on 30 March 2007 but has delayed ratification. According to the Office for Disability Issues, the UK will ratify when '[its] laws, policies, practices and procedures are compatible with the convention's obligations either as they stand or as modified (so far as is possible) by any reservations which the UK makes'.

Louise Arbour to step down as human rights chief

Louise Arbour, the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, has announced that she will not seek a second term when her mandate expires at the end of June 2008. Arbour, who was previously Chief Prosecutor for the International Criminal Tribunals for the former Yugoslavia and Rwanda, has held the position since 2004.

Ms Arbour cited personal reasons for stepping down and denied claims that she was quitting because of tensions with certain countries. 'It would be surprising or unimaginable to do this work for four years and to depart with unanimous accolades,' she said. 'You would have to wonder about the quality of work.'

The UN to stay put in Kosovo after all

As expected, Kosovo declared its independence from Serbia in early 2008, on 17 February. Serbia reacted by rejecting the declaration and denouncing the US, which had promptly recognised the region's independence, for helping to create a 'false state'. Russia, Serbia's Security Council ally, called for the UN to proclaim the declaration illegal. Violence erupted in Serb areas of Kosovo; one UN police officer was killed.

The UN's planned hand-over to a Kosovo government under the supervision of an EU mission now looks in doubt. The EU deployment, condemned by Kosovo Serbs and Belgrade to be illegal, could be delayed or hampered by an unclear mandate, which could undermine Kosovo's stability. The head of the UN Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK), Joachim Rucker, has said that he expects UNMIK to stay and that the UN mission and the EU deployment would need to work together to avoid duplication. Mr Rucker stated, 'As long as [UN Security Council] resolution 1244 is in place, we will always have a UN responsibility for Kosovo.'

Scant progress in Darfur as civilians continue to die

In April, Jan Eliasson and Salim Ahmed Salim, respectively the UN and AU envoys to Darfur, met with Sudanese government officials as well as members of rebel movements which had refused to sign previous peace accords. The envoys emphasised that reducing violence was a prerequisite for achieving any political progress. The visit followed the agreement of a non-aggression pact between the governments of Chad and Sudan that is viewed as a crucial step towards achieving a durable solution.

The joint AU-UN peacekeeping mission (UNAMID) is seriously under-staffed; comprising only 10,600 personnel, it is at less than half its target strength of 26,000. The mission is also being held back by the international community's failure to supply helicopters and other vital equipment.

Speaking to the UN Security Council in April, John Holmes, the UN's humanitarian coordinator, warned that the number of people who have died as a result of the conflict in Darfur could be 50 per cent higher than previously thought. Mr Holmes said that violence, disease and malnutrition may have claimed up to 300,000 lives. He stressed that the revised figure was an extrapolation from earlier estimates, and was not based on new research.

Dispatches



Cyprus: Once more into the breach



David Hannay

The Cyprus problem, one of the longest-running international disputes on the UN's agenda and the source of endless frustration to a succession of Secretaries-General and Special Representatives, has suddenly awoken like Sleeping Beauty, from a four-year slumber.

In the first round of the recent presidential election, two thirds of Greek Cypriots voted for candidates who promised to resume the negotiations for the reunification of the island, and rejected the incumbent president, Tassos Papadopoulos, who they knew from past experience would never do anything about it. Since then the new president, Dimitris Christofias, has met with his Turkish Cypriot opposite number, Mehmet Ali Talat, and agreed to resume the search for a settlement. They have also opened up the Ledra street crossing point in the old city of Nicosia, thus removing one of the most blatant vestiges of the separation of the two communities.

It is easy enough, of course, to give a cynical shrug and say 'What's new?'. There have been plenty of false dawns before, which have led to dead-ends at the negotiating table, or to rejection at the ballot box – most recently in 2004 when three quarters of Greek Cypriots voted to reject the Annan Plan, which proposed a federal Cypriot state. The two sides distrust each other profoundly and haggle over the smallest detail. Public support for a settlement, judging by recent opinion polling, has waned. It is more than 30 years since Archbishop Makarios and Rauf Denktaş committed themselves to the basis of forming a bi-communal, bi-zonal federation, and no single detail of that plan

has ever been agreed. So some caution needs to be mixed with the enthusiasm expressed by the international community at recent developments. No one has ever yet lost money by betting against the prospect of a Cyprus settlement.

One thing is sure. The UN has to be at the centre of any new negotiating effort. There is simply no alternative. The parties themselves need a facilitator, a midwife, if they are to succeed. The European Union, with Greece and Cyprus already members, cannot play that role, although it needs to be part of the negotiations, to help ease the path of the Turkish Cypriots into the EU and to provide the financial underpinning for a settlement.

'This could be the final realistic opportunity to heal one of the last open wounds in Europe'

Other outsiders need to stand farther back than they have done from earlier attempts at negotiation, leaving more space for the Cypriots to take possession of whatever emerges from the latest round. But those outsiders will need to be there, hopefully this time unified in their support for the UN and ready to provide a Security Council guarantee of a settlement, the lack of which, thanks to a Russian veto, was a key element in the 2004 debacle.

As to the negotiations themselves, they should not be rushed. Artificial deadlines have not worked in the past, and will not do so now. Linking transitional elements of any settlement – for instance the withdrawal of the last Turkish troops from the island – to the date of Turkey's own accession to the EU could prove sensible. Looking for ways in which unpalatable aspects of earlier solutions could be sweetened for one side without damaging the other is essential; the zero-sum mentality throughout the island needs to be an early casualty. And the unremitting megaphone diplomacy which has accompanied every previous negotiating round should be avoided. Both peoples need to be prepared for a compromise settlement, not fed a rich diet of unrealisable aspirations.

Above all, everyone concerned needs to be aware that this could be the final realistic opportunity to heal one of the last open wounds in Europe, not just the one in Cyprus itself, but between Greece and Turkey too. A Cyprus settlement is a political, if not a legal, necessity for Turkey's EU accession; but Turkey's accession is a necessity for a Cyprus settlement. There is a lot riding on this negotiation.

Lord Hannay of Chiswick was the British Special Representative for Cyprus from 1996 to 2003. He is the author of Cyprus: The Search for a Solution



The United Nations tackles the responsibility to protect



Ed Luck

At the 2005 UN World Summit, the largest ever gathering of world leaders did something quite remarkable. They acknowledged that each 'state has the responsibility to protect its populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity', and they pledged to prevent such crimes, including their incitement. Second, in an innovative step, they underlined the international community's responsibility to assist states in meeting these fundamental obligations. And third, should a state manifestly fail in these obligations, they underscored their readiness to take collective action, under the UN Charter, to help protect populations from these four crimes.

Some critics, noting that these protection obligations are well-anchored in existing international humanitarian and human rights law, have questioned whether the responsibility to protect – or 'R2P' – qualifies as a historic breakthrough. But the universal commitment to these standards at the highest levels, including by many countries that are not states parties to the relevant conventions, offers stunning testimony to their political power, as well as to their worldwide public appeal. The third set of commitments, on the collective response to cases of manifest failure by states to protect their populations, has generated much of the public commentary, as well as understandable trepidations in some capitals. Yet it may well be in the often overlooked second set of commitments, on international assistance to states seeking to avoid stumbling down the path to domestic upheaval and mass atrocities, that the UN will have the most to contribute to the realisation of R2P principles on the ground.

UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon has emerged as the strongest and most

consistent voice for operationalising the responsibility to protect. He understands that it would be neither morally acceptable nor sound public policy to be left with the stark choice of looking away or intervening militarily in the face of imminent or unfolding atrocities. He recognises, as well, the need to develop a wide range of tools to enhance prevention and protection. The UN's first goal should be to help states to succeed, not just to respond to failures of their will or capacity.

This will not, of course, be a simple task. Conditions vary from place to place, and predicting how societies will respond to stress – most recently in Kenya – has been far more an uncertain art than a science.

'R2P cannot protect peoples from all of the world's ills. But if we can keep its scope focused on the four crimes and violations addressed by the Summit – genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing, and crimes against humanity – then its grand words could indeed assume historic proportions'

Researchers tell us, however, that the global incidence of genocide has dropped markedly over the past two decades, despite the persistence of mass violence against civilians, particularly women and children, in Darfur and elsewhere. It appears that the collaborative efforts of the UN, regional and sub-regional organisations, donors, neighbours and civil society to heal and rebuild troubled societies, to prevent and mediate conflict, and to promote sustainable development are making a difference in many places. So, in several ways, operationalising R2P will entail building on strands of ongoing work, while providing a fresh lens for seeing

how the UN's diverse efforts on the ground could be better integrated and directed.

R2P prevention and protection efforts rest on four pillars, each with their own political and policy challenges: 1) capacity-building and rebuilding torn societies; 2) early warning and assessment; 3) rapid response, often combining civilian and military elements; and 4) collaboration with regional and sub-regional arrangements. R2P capacity-building is likely to be politically easy, but intellectually difficult for the reasons noted above; early warning and assessment quite the opposite. The UN has far more information assets in the field – human rights, humanitarian, peacekeeping, and political – and in more places than ever before. What the organisation has had great trouble doing, however, for both political and bureaucratic reasons, is bringing these diverse strands of information together in a cross-cutting understanding of the patterns developing within complex societies. Beyond this largely Secretariat function, rapid response may, in extreme cases, entail Security Council authorisation of coercive military intervention under Chapter VII of the UN Charter. Far more often, however, it is likely to involve earlier and less divisive civilian-led action under Chapters VI or VIII. For example, investigations by the Security Council under Article 34 need not be restricted to situations posing a direct threat to international peace and security. Finally, the UN works best when it can enlist local partners, whether in Africa, Asia, Central America, or the Balkans. Given the sensitivities and diversity of R2P situations, this fourth pillar could prove indispensable as the principle moves from promise to practice.

This is an ambitious and deep agenda, with historic aspirations. Those advocates who seek to apply R2P to a much wider set of policy challenges are doing the concept and its potential a great disservice. R2P cannot protect peoples from all of the world's ills. But if we can keep its scope focused on the four crimes and violations addressed by the Summit – genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing, and crimes against humanity – then its grand words could indeed assume historic proportions.

Dr Edward C. Luck is Special Adviser to the UN Secretary-General on the Responsibility to Protect.

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How to respond to soaring food prices



Jacques Diouf

Soaring food prices are threatening

to increase the number of hungry people in the world, at 862 million an already unacceptably high figure. According to the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the Food Price Index shot up by 47 per cent during the year ending in January 2008. This steep increase threatens the world's most vulnerable people with the spectre of hunger and malnutrition. It also threatens the rest of us. High food prices eat away at our living standards in a world already reeling from economic uncertainty.

The FAO has been warning about these threats since June 2007. Now, following growing civil disturbances caused by high food prices, the issue has finally bubbled to the top of the global agenda.

By nature, I am an optimist. I want to stress that there are actions we can take to stop food prices from further endangering the lives of the world's poorest people. But we must act now if we are to reach the shared objective of the World Food Summit and the first Millennium Development Goal: to cut hunger by half by the year 2015.

Sustainable growth and investment in agriculture is critical for hunger reduction. Some 70 per cent of the poor in developing countries live in rural areas and depend in one way or another on agriculture for their livelihoods. So, if we want to reduce poverty and accelerate development, we must first reduce hunger and improve the nutrition of poor rural people. Hunger is a consequence and a cause of poverty. It negatively affects health, labour productivity and investment choices, thus perpetuating poverty across generations.

International prices for basic staples – like wheat, maize and rice – have all risen to near record levels for several reasons, including depleted world stocks, tight ex-

port supplies, and increased demand in emerging economies.

Unusual climate has played a role in hampering food production. Last year, unfavourable weather hit major food crops in several key exporting countries, such as Australia and Ukraine.

Rising petroleum and gas prices are pushing up the costs of fertiliser and freight, and encouraging more and more agricultural land to be planted for biofuels, not food. The decline in the value of the US dollar, the currency used in the international trade of most commodities, relative to most other major currencies has prompted many producers to increase prices to make up for exchange losses.

Growing demand from more affluent people in rapidly developing Asian countries is also a factor. A continuation of this trend, plus unknown future impacts of global warming, has potentially grave implications for global food security.

Paradoxically, rising food prices offer the best hope for increasing food production. However, for that to happen where it is most needed – in the poorest developing countries – fundamental economic and trade choices, including more investment in agriculture and rural infrastructures, will need to be made.

Developed countries will have to do more to reduce distorting agricultural subsidies, so that poor farmers in the developing world can trade on a level playing field. Developing countries will need to remove institutional and financial constraints that limit production and private investment in the agriculture sector.

There are five immediate steps the FAO believes should be part of an integrated and comprehensive response to rising food prices:

First, translate higher prices into increased agricultural productivity and production, through better access to inputs and improved services, new technologies and rural infrastructures. Government policies should support the development of knowledge and human capital and should be favourable to private investment.

Second, improve farm-to-market infrastructure, marketing services and regulations, and agricultural institutions. Such measures would increase farmers' incentives to produce, while simultaneously increasing opportunities to access new markets.

Third, facilitate financing of food imports to poor countries. International financing and guarantee mechanisms could help address this problem and the balance of payments of low-income food-

deficit countries. Private food importers are sometimes unable to secure adequate trade financing because of credit ceilings and the perception of high risk.

Fourth, strengthen safety nets for the poor and the most vulnerable people. Examples are conditional and unconditional cash transfers, nutrition programmes such as school meals, and assistance for special vulnerable groups. Such schemes need to be intensified to stop hunger and poverty from worsening.

Fifth, complement these initiatives by reviewing measures that were put in place to deal with low commodity prices. Policies will need to be revisited to address the new economic situation, in which so much agricultural land is being used for non-food purposes.

These steps are prerequisites for dealing with soaring food prices. But the effects of climate change, the increased use of food commodities to produce biofuels, and the clearing of precious forests for new farmland present murkier problems – ones which require urgent scientific and economic consideration. The FAO will host a 'High-level Conference on World Food Security and the Challenges of Climate Change and Bioenergy' from 3 to 5 June this year, to determine the likely impacts of these factors on agriculture, and to identify ways of meeting any threats to food security.

Even with bold action, high food prices and market volatility could become more the norm than an exception as the global population swells: it is projected to reach 9 billion by 2050 – a 50 per cent increase in the number of people to feed. The FAO is dedicated to finding ways to prevent high food prices from increasing the number of hungry people in the world, thus keeping alive the hope that we can fulfil the promises of the World Food Summit and the Millennium Development Goals.

Dr Jacques Diouf is Director-General of the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO).

The FAO, with 191 member states, one member organisation and one associate member, aims to raise levels of nutrition, improve agricultural productivity, better the lives of rural populations and contribute to the growth of the world economy: www.fao.org

Oil-for-Food Who dunnit?

Now that the dust has settled, the culprits become evident



Photo © US Federal Government

The UN Oil-for-Food Programme

was set up by the Security Council in April 1995 to provide humanitarian assistance to the Iraqi people, under duress from international sanctions imposed against the Saddam Hussein regime. The programme funded \$31 billion worth of humanitarian supplies and equipment between 1997 and 2003, and succeeded in halving malnutrition rates among children under five between 1996 and 2002.

However, the programme also gave the Iraqi regime and others the opportunity to enrich themselves through manipulating the supervised sale of oil. The UN's reputation suffered, and Kofi Annan, then Secretary-General, became the target of

much vitriol, particularly in the US. One American senator described the scheme as the 'biggest financial scandal ever'.

An independent investigation was launched. Headed by Paul Volcker, the former Chairman of the US Federal Reserve, the inquiry panel found that 2,253 firms had made illegal payments to the Iraqi regime totalling \$1.8 billion – less than 2 per cent of the \$100 billion in oil sales and humanitarian purchases which took place under the programme.

Mr Volcker and his colleagues identified serious lapses in UN management, but did not uncover the rampant corruption alleged by some. Only two UN officials have been convicted of oil-for-food offences: Benon Sevan, who ran the programme and is hiding out in his native Cyprus; and Alexander Yakovlev, a UN procurement official who is awaiting sentence in the US.

Very few of the countries, firms and individuals exposed by the Volcker report have been prosecuted. Of the 52 countries named, only 28 have asked to consult the documents assembled by the investigation.

Most countries – including Russia, which profited significantly from the oil deals – have ignored the findings.

In a handful of countries – the US, France, Australia, the UK, Germany and Switzerland – investigations are underway. Many of the companies named in the report are household names: Chevron in the US, Total in France and GlaxoSmithKline and AstraZeneca in the UK. Chevron has agreed to forfeit \$30 million in restitution. Individuals to be charged include businessmen, lobbyists, a former French ambassador to the UN and the former head of the French foreign ministry. The seven people convicted worldwide were all prosecuted in the US.

The Oil-for-Food Programme was not a crime perpetrated by the UN; if anything, it was a crime of fraud against the UN. Indeed, as *The Economist* has argued, 'the real culprits at the UN were not its officials but the Security Council, whose five permanent members invented a scheme that was wide open to abuse but who failed to impose the necessary safeguards'.

The US-UN relationship The next chapter

All three presidential candidates offer hope for multilateralism



Photo © iStockPhoto

The relationship of the UN with the

Bush administration has been rocky. The failure to get UN endorsement for the war in Iraq prompted Americans to look elsewhere for foreign policy tools, and John Bolton's stint as Ambassador to the UN served to ratchet up tensions. With the appointments of Ban Ki-moon as Secretary-General of the UN and Zalmay Khalilzad as Bolton's successor, things have improved somewhat. How much we can expect this improvement to continue will depend, at least in part, on the outcome of the presidential elections in November.

The Democratic candidates, Barack Obama and Hillary Clinton, both emphasise the dangers of overstretch in UN peacekeeping operations, as well as the need to open UN decision-making bodies to newly emerging powers such as India. Both also highlight the damage caused to the reputation of the UN and the international human rights regime by a Human Rights Council which focuses disproportionately on Israel in the face of large-scale abuses such as in Darfur. But Mr Obama and Mrs Clinton agree about the need for an effective UN, and support constructive US engagement with the organisation. Mr Obama has written that the need for UN reform will not 'be solved unless America rededicates itself to the organisation and its mission'. Likewise, Mrs Clinton pledges that she would make 'international institutions work, and work through them when possible'.

John McCain's support for the UN is more hedged. Critical of the world

body's 'universal-membership system', Mr McCain propounds a worldwide 'League of Democracies', composed of 'like-minded nations working together for peace and liberty'. He explains that this 'would not supplant the UN ... [but would] act when the UN fails'. Whereas Mr Obama and Mrs Clinton stress the need for sanctions against Iran to be agreed by the UN Security Council, Mr McCain argues that the US should go it alone on sanctions should the UN prove 'unwilling to act'.

The Democratic candidates' foreign policy vision seems to be more unambiguously supportive of the UN than that which can be inferred from the presumptive Republican nominee. But, from the stated positions of all three candidates, there may be justification in anticipating a less troubled relationship between the UN and the US – which is good news for multilateralism.

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Resurrecting Reykjavik: a new opportunity for nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation



Shirley Williams

Reykjavik, and the record since

Disarmament negotiations between the United States and Soviet Union were crucial to the peaceful resolution of the Cold War. The meeting of individuals at the highest diplomatic and scientific levels on a regular basis was in a sense more important than the modest decreases in weaponry that their negotiations achieved. This regular discourse on disarmament created an atmosphere where, in 1986 at a meeting in Reykjavik, Iceland, Ronald Reagan and Mikhail Gorbachev were able to discuss a timetable for the total and final elimination of nuclear weapons.

The Reykjavik meeting was ultimately unsuccessful; and the following two decades demonstrated a huge missed opportunity. Both bilateral and multilateral discussions about disarmament slipped down the agenda of international priorities. But it is important to recognise that some progress was made. There are currently about 31,000 nuclear warheads deployed or in reserve, down from some 70,000 in the mid-1980s. The Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), negotiated in 1968, has proved remarkably effective at preventing the spread of nuclear weapons. The NPT recognised the five nuclear-armed states which existed at the time; today the number with such capacity has grown only to nine. This is an impressive achievement given the relative simplicity of the science involved, and the political motivation for states to acquire nuclear deterrents.

The imperative for action

The US and Russia still maintain several thousand nuclear missiles each, many on hair-trigger alert. Russia's outgoing president, Vladimir Putin, recently announced that Russia had recommenced regular long-range bomber flights, and that its weapons were once again aimed at European cities. In February, Mr Putin warned of 'a new phase in the arms race...unfolding in the world'. North Korea has illustrated in recent years that producing a crude nuclear capability results not in regime change, but in concessions from the international community. Instability in Pakistan raises the alarming possibility of a nuclear-armed failed state. The framework of international non-proliferation agreements has never seemed more fragile and a moment of potential crisis is approaching. The US unilaterally pulled out of the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty in June 2002 in order to pursue its missile defence ambitions. Russia has threatened to abandon the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty if missile defence systems are deployed in Eastern Europe.

The state of the non-proliferation regime will be evaluated at the next NPT Review Conference, to take place in 2010. Failure to produce results could precipitate a nuclear arms race across the world, as scores of countries with the wealth and scientific capability rush to develop a nuclear deterrent. Such an outcome is too terrifying to contemplate but remains an all too realistic possibility.

Help from high places

Yet a growing chorus of voices from around the globe and across the political spectrum is suggesting that we now have a unique opportunity not only to avert nuclear disaster, but to make comprehensive, multilateral nuclear disarmament an achievable objective.

In a letter to the *Wall Street Journal* in January 2007, former US Secretaries of State George Schultz and Henry Kissinger, former Secretary of Defence William Perry and former Chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee Sam Nunn (two of them Republicans, two Democrats) announced a bold vision: 'We endorse setting the goal of a world free of nuclear weapons and working energetically on the actions required to achieve that goal.'

Later that same month, also in the *Wall Street Journal*, Mikhail Gorbachev declared his support for this aim: 'As someone who signed the first treaties on real reductions in nuclear weapons, I feel it is my duty to support their call for urgent action.' And then in January 2008 a third article appeared, this time endorsed by a formidable cohort of former and current politicians, cabinet members, presidential advisers, ambassadors, scientists and academics.

These individuals, collectively known as the 'Hoover Group', echoed the call for a world free of nuclear weapons. They were, as I have been, encouraged by the support their ambitious proposal has generated.

In June 2007, Margaret Beckett, Britain's then Foreign Secretary, gave a remarkable speech in New York at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. She argued, 'What we need is both a vision – a scenario for a world free of nuclear weapons – and action – progressive steps to reduce warhead numbers and to limit the role of nuclear weapons in security policy.' The British Defence Secretary, Des Browne, recently announced funding for a report examining the political and technical requirements for ridding the world of nuclear weapons, and has offered to host a technical conference on the verification of nuclear disarmament before the 2010 NPT Review Conference.

Concrete proposals are being developed to make a nuclear-free world a genuinely feasible objective. A meeting held at

Stanford University in October 2007 to build upon the legacy of the 1986 Reykjavik summit was presented with 'a road map to reaching zero'. The Nuclear Threat Initiative, working out of Washington, has proposed a nuclear fuel bank, funded in part by the philanthropist Warren Buffett, which would provide stockpiles of low-grade nuclear material for any state wishing to develop nuclear power stations and seeking secure supplies of nuclear fuel.

The need for leadership and a common goal

The obstacles to making the world safe from the existential threat of nuclear weapons remain huge. Relations between Russia and the West, in particular Britain, are worse than at any time since the Cold War. President Bush's determination to place missile defence facilities in Eastern Europe, despite increasingly vocal protests from politicians and the publics of the Czech Republic and Poland, has done little to reassure Russia and others of American goodwill. China seems determined to use some of its vast new wealth to develop its conventional and strategic military capability. Britain, while preparing to reduce the capacity of its Trident nuclear submarines, nevertheless insists on maintaining the deterrent, inconsistent with the professed commitment by Margaret Beckett and Des Browne to global de-nuclearisation.

The barriers are real and formidable, but the potential benefit to humanity if we succeed is without comparison. The first step must be a clear statement of our ultimate objective. I hope that our political leaders in Asia, Europe, the US and the UN, both those in government and those in opposition (and particularly those competing for the American presidency), will commit themselves to the goal of a nuclear-free world. It will take a long time to get there, but the direction and the momentum generated by committing to such a goal would dispel the long shadow cast over the world by nuclear obliteration. These will be the men and women tasked with the review of the NPT in 2010. It is they who will possess a once-in-a-generation opportunity to secure global peace. They must provide the leadership that the world needs, and we must support them every step of the way.

Baroness Williams is a member of the Board of Directors of the Nuclear Threat Initiative.

The Hoover Group

Named after the Hoover Institution at Stanford University, the 'Hoover Group' was founded by former US Secretaries of State George Schultz and Henry Kissinger, former Secretary of Defense William Perry, and former Chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee Sam Nunn.

In their January 2007 article in the *Wall Street Journal*, the group recommended the following concrete steps to achieve a nuclear-free world:

- **Work intensively with leaders of nuclear-weapon states to turn the goal of a world without nuclear weapons into a joint enterprise.**
- **Halt the Cold War posture of deployed nuclear weapons to reduce the danger of their accidental or unauthorised use.**
- **Continue to reduce substantially the size of nuclear forces in all states that possess them.**
- **Eliminate short-range or 'tactical' nuclear weapons designed to be forward-deployed.**
- **Initiate a bipartisan process with the US Senate to ratify the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty and work to secure ratification by other key states.**
- **Provide the highest possible standards of security for global stocks of weapons, weapons-usable plutonium, and highly enriched uranium.**
- **Control the uranium enrichment process, combined with the guaranteed provision of uranium for nuclear power reactors from controlled international reserves under the supervision of the IAEA.**
- **Halt the production of fissile material for weapons globally, phase out the use of highly enriched uranium in civil commerce, and remove weapons-usable uranium from research facilities around the world.**
- **Redouble efforts to resolve regional confrontations and conflicts that give rise to new nuclear powers.**



President Ronald Reagan meets with General Secretary Gorbachev in Geneva in 1985 and again in Reykjavik in 1986. Photos courtesy of White House Photo Office

Access to clean water and sanitation: cutting across development, human rights and security

THE MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS call for the halving of the proportion of people living without access to safe drinking water or basic sanitation by 2015. UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon noted in his message on World Water Day on 22 March that the world is nowhere near achieving that goal. At the present rate, Mr Ban estimates that sub-Saharan Africa will not reach the target until 2076. Every 20 seconds, a child dies from a combination of poor sanitation, a lack of safe drinking water and inadequate hygiene.

Lack of access to sanitation and clean water forces children to stay away from school and prevents adults from engaging in productive work. The UN estimates that every dollar invested in developing sanitation and clean water capacity yields a seven-dollar increase in productivity, thereby cutting poverty and raising living standards.

Access to sanitation and clean water is not only a development issue. The UN General Assembly has declared access to clean water to be a fundamental human right. As the UN Development Programme has noted, lack of access to sanitation and clean water is primarily due to exclusion and neglect of the poor, rather than a dearth of water resources or insufficient technical capacity. Competition for scarce water resources can also lead to violent conflict.

MIDDLE EAST

Too many people, too little water

The Middle East has only 1 per cent of global fresh water, but 5 per cent of the world's population. Water is an important strategic issue, particularly in the Levant. Both Israel and Jordan rely on the Jordan River, which is controlled by Israel. Israel threatened military action in 2002 when Lebanon opened a new pumping station to take water from a river feeding the Jordan. The Golan Heights contributes a third of Israel's annual water consumption, providing a motivation for the continuation of the Israeli occupation. Water is also an important issue in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict – Ariel Sharon has been quoted as saying that water was one of the causes of the 1967 Six-Day War.

DARFUR

Tribal conflict aggravated by water scarcity

During the mid-1980s, western Sudan suffered an extended drought, with accompanying desertification. Poor management of the region's dwindling water reserves, together with a growing population, exacerbated traditional tensions between the cattle-herding tribes of north Darfur and the settled arable-farming tribes of south Darfur over water and sustainable arable land. These disputes contributed to an offensive against the Khartoum government in 2003, and to campaigns against the rebels by the government and government-backed militias. The conflict has in turn further constrained Darfuris' access to clean water and sanitation.

ETHIOPIA

Water scarcity threatens women's rights

Less than one third of Ethiopians have access to safe water. Collecting water generally falls to women and girls, who spend an estimated 26 per cent of their time performing this task – time which could be spent in school or on income-generating activities. Their health is also compromised – through the physical stress of carrying heavy water containers or through exposure to contaminated water. Even walking to the sources can be dangerous, with women facing sexual violence en route. But women are not only the most affected by water issues; they are also often leaders in the struggle to ensure good use of water resources by their communities, such as by teaching hygiene habits to their families.

AFGHANISTAN

Environmental damage limits clean water access

Environmental damage in rural Afghanistan, caused in part through war damage, deforestation and over-exploitation, has had a significant impact on access to clean drinking water, leading to health problems, particularly among children. Eighty per cent of rural Afghans do not have access to clean water sources and only one in 10 has access to adequate sanitation. This has led to rapid urbanisation, intensifying pressure on water sources in Afghan towns and cities, where over half of residents have no access to clean water and only one in three benefits from safe sanitation. The health problems associated with water scarcity in rural areas, combined with increased urbanisation, have reduced agricultural productivity, compromising food security and further hurting the poor.

INDIA

The right to life encompasses the right to water

In India, federal and state courts have interpreted article 21 of the country's constitution – the right to life – as encompassing the right to safe and sufficient water and sanitation. In 1990, petitioners in Kerala claimed that a scheme to pump up ground water would upset the fresh water equilibrium, leading to salinity in the remaining water resources. The Kerala High Court recognised that the 'right to sweet water and the right to free air are attributes of the right to life, for these are the basic elements which sustain life itself'.

MALDIVES

Despite clean water, problems remain

For the Maldives – in common with many island nations – groundwater is a scarce resource. The inhabitants of Male', the largest island, obtain their water through desalination. Though this secures access to safe drinking water for 100 per cent of the island's population, the process of making the water potable throws up other problems. Desalinated water is produced by burning diesel oil, which is mostly imported, raising concerns over energy security and contributing to environmental degradation through greenhouse gas emissions.

Do something.

Ask your MP to sign EDM 172 on child victims of trafficking

'That this House acknowledges ECPAT UK and UNICEF's concern that child victims of trafficking, even after they are identified and placed in care, remain a highly vulnerable group within our society, highlighted in the recent report, *Rights Here, Rights Now: recommendations for protecting trafficked children*; congratulates the Three Small Steps campaign to Support Child Victims of Trafficking; and calls upon the government to withdraw the UK's general reservation on immigration and nationality to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, to ratify the Council of Europe's Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings without delay and, in order to ensure monitoring and accountability to Parliament, to appoint an independent child trafficking rapporteur.'

Visit www.una.org.uk/dosomething

or call 020 7766 3459



Parliament



Lord Hannay questions government on Burma in the House of Lords

UNA-UK's Chair, Lord Hannay, has questioned the government about prospects for meaningful dialogue between the government and opposition in Burma over constitutional reform. Lord Bach, replying for the government, said that the military regime had thus far resisted the UN Security Council's call for such dialogue.

Arguing that the regime's engagement with UN special envoy Ibrahim Gambari was 'little more than a sham designed to gain time while the regime rams through its own constitution', Lord Hannay asked what further steps could be taken, beyond humanitarian aid and targeted sanctions. In his reply, Lord Bach stressed that the UN should continue to play a leading role, and praised the personal engagement of the UN Secretary-General, saying that he had 'the support of the entire Security Council and the wider international community in taking forward his good offices mission'.

The Burmese regime has announced that a national referendum will be held on 10 May to approve a draft constitution. It was drafted with no input from the pro-democracy opposition and effectively disqualifies opposition leader Aung San Suu Kyi from holding office. The regime has pledged to hold multiparty elections by 2010.

The House of Lords Hansard can be accessed at www.parliament.uk



Photo © iStockPhoto

Burma: what further steps can be taken?

UNA-UK submits evidence on the UN's role in international public health

The first inquiry of the House of Lords Ad Hoc Committee on Intergovernmental Organisations is evaluating the effectiveness of intergovernmental organisations' efforts to control communicable diseases.

In its submission to the committee, UNA-UK described infectious disease as a 'problem without a passport' and highlighted the work of the World Health Organization, UNAIDS, the UN Population Fund (UNFPA) and the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF). The submission argued that, as 'the only organisation with a truly global reach, the UN...is best equipped to meet such pervasive threats to international public health'.

To view UNA-UK's submission, visit www.una.org.uk/parliament

MPs urged to join All-Party Group on the United Nations

A motion passed by UNA-UK Annual Conference in March urges all UNA branches to contact their MPs to ensure that they are, or will become, members of the All-Party Parliamentary Group on the UN. The group – for which UNA-UK acts as the secretariat – aims to raise awareness among MPs and peers about the UN and its contributions across the areas of peace and security, development and human rights. Please note that, although any MP or Peer may join an all-party group, government ministers and shadow ministers are often reluctant to join because of time constraints or other concerns. If your local MP is a minister or shadow minister, you should still make sure they know about UNA-UK. For more information contact Mark Rusling on 020 7766 3459 or rusling@una.org.uk

Government publishes draft war powers bill

In July 2007, the government initiated a consultation on the role of Parliament in deciding whether to deploy British troops to fight in a conflict abroad.

UNA-UK fed its views into this process, welcoming plans to extend parliamentary oversight while raising concerns about the potential impact on the UK's support for UN peace operations.

On 25 March, Jack Straw, the Justice Secretary, released a white paper outlining the government's position. It argues for a House of Commons resolution setting out the processes Parliament should follow in approving any deployment. Exceptions to the requirement for prospective or retrospective parliamentary consent would exist to allow forces to respond to an emergency or to carry out an operation in secrecy. The Prime Minister would decide on the timing of seeking parliamentary approval. The white paper does not put forward any special arrangement for UK contributions to UN peace operations.

To view the white paper, visit www.justice.gov.uk

Climate Change Bill strengthened

Introduced in Parliament on 14 November 2007, the Climate Change Bill has completed its passage through the House of Lords. It will shortly go to the House of Commons for consideration. Royal Assent is expected by summer 2008.

In February, Environment Secretary Hilary Benn announced amendments to the bill. The revised bill subjects the government's CO₂ emissions target – a cut of at least 60 per cent by 2050 – to statutory review, leaving open the possibility that the target will be made more ambitious. Environmental campaigners argue that a decrease of at least 80 per cent by 2050 is needed.

The government's amendments also include an 'indicative annual range' for carbon emissions. The bill sets five-year budget periods for carbon accounting. The annual range, according to DEFRA, will help 'ensure that the government can be held to account for progress during each year of the budget period'.

For further information on the bill visit www.defra.gov.uk/environment/climatechange/uk

Resources



Books



Law and Practice of the United Nations: Documents and Commentary

Simon Chesterman, Thomas Franck and David Malone
Oxford University Press
December 2007

Combining primary materials and expert commentary, this book demonstrates the interaction between law and practice in the UN, and highlights the possibilities and limitations of multilateral institutions. Each chapter begins with a short introductory essay by the authors that describes how the documents that follow illustrate a set of legal, institutional, and political issues relevant to the practice of diplomacy and the development of public international law through the UN.

www.oup.com



Gendered Peace: Women's Struggles for Post-War Justice and Reconciliation

Donna Pankhurst (ed.)
Routledge
October 2007

This volume contributes to the growing literature on women, conflict and peacebuilding, focusing on the moments after the end of a conflict, often characterised by violence and insecurity for women. *Gendered Peace* traces the development of international legal advances for women, and contrasts this success with the actual experience of women in places like Sierra Leone, Rwanda, South Africa, Afghanistan, Bangladesh, East Timor, Peru, Central America and the Balkans.

www.routledge.com



Raphael Lemkin and the Struggle for the Genocide Convention

John Cooper
Palgrave Macmillan
January 2008

This is the first comprehensive biography of Raphael Lemkin, the man who invented the word genocide and campaigned relentlessly for the 1948 UN convention. The book describes Lemkin's campaign, showing how his ideas were formed in the midst of ethnic strife in Eastern Europe.

www.palgrave.com



Chasing the Flame: Sergio Vieira de Mello and the Fight to Save the World

Samantha Power
Allen Lane
March 2008

Chasing the Flame tells the life story of Sergio Vieira de Mello, the Brazilian head of the UN Mission to Iraq who was killed in 2003 in a terrorist attack on the world body's Baghdad headquarters. De Mello worked for the United Nations for nearly four decades. He served in Lebanon in the aftermath of Israel's 1982 invasion; in Cambodia in the early 1990s, negotiating with the Khmer Rouge and repatriating refugees; in Bosnia, helping to end the slaughter; and in Kosovo and East Timor, contributing to efforts to build nations out of war-torn societies.

www.penguin.co.uk



NGO Involvement in International Organizations: A Legal Analysis

Sergey Ripinsky and Peter Van den Bossche
British Institute of International and Comparative Law
December 2007

This book investigates the arrangements for NGO involvement in the activities of

a range of international institutions and examines and compares relevant rules and practices. The analysis focuses in particular on the legal basis for NGO involvement, forms of involvement, NGO participatory rights, applicable accreditation criteria and procedures, and rules on subsequent monitoring of accredited NGOs.

www.biicl.org



A Billion Lives: An Eyewitness Report from the Frontlines of Humanity

Jan Egeland
Simon & Schuster
March 2008

As Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs, Jan Egeland oversaw the coordination of the UN's humanitarian work for three and a half years. The book gives an account of Egeland's experiences of the war in Iraq and the strife in Darfur, as well as of the Indian Ocean tsunami and the South Asian earthquake. A close adviser of former Secretary-General Kofi Annan, Egeland served at the top levels of the UN at a particularly difficult period in its history, when the organisation suffered the divisive aftermath of the Iraq war, the Oil-for-Food scandal, and terrorist attacks against its personnel.

www.simonsays.com

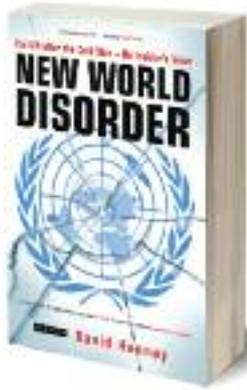


A No-Nonsense Guide to the United Nations

Maggie Black
New Internationalist
June 2007

This slim volume, part of the *New Internationalist's* No-Nonsense series, explains in accessible and lively language how the UN system works. On UN reform, the author departs from conventional wisdom, arguing that the current push for 'system-wide coherence' at the UN is misguided. Sir Jeremy Greenstock, a former British ambassador to the UN, wrote the foreword.

www.nononsenseguides.org



New World Disorder: The UN after the Cold War – An Insider's View

David Hannay

The end of the Cold War triggered an historic shift in world politics, and nowhere was this more keenly felt than in the

United Nations. In *New World Disorder*, David Hannay – who, as Britain's ambassador to the UN, sat in the Security Council from the time of Saddam Hussein's invasion of Kuwait until the Srebrenica massacre in Bosnia – gives a first-hand view of events as they unfolded.

Just weeks after George H.W. Bush and Mikhail Gorbachev's historic handshake, the UN was being asked to repel the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, to wind up a string of Third World proxy wars, and to find a solution to the challenges of environmental degradation and climate change. At first, the five permanent members of the Security Council worked together to an unprecedented extent, with notable success. But as Hannay shows, little was done to prepare for the problems of state failure – in Somalia, in the former Yugoslavia, in Rwanda and in Afghanistan – which proved beyond the UN's capacity to handle and which frayed the solidarity of the main powers.

After retiring from diplomatic service, Hannay was appointed by then Secretary-General Kofi Annan to the UN High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change, set up to identify ways of making the UN better equipped to deal with the range of challenges facing humanity. He recounts here with insight and candour why this programme – the most ambitious attempt at reform of the organisation since it was founded in 1945 – came to be derailed.

New World Disorder is an invaluable source of information for anyone seeking to understand the current structures, dynamics and trends of world politics. It is also a compelling account of one of the great turning points in world history, as seen from inside the eye of the storm.

'An eloquent account of the drama and turbulence which buffeted the United Nations at the end of the Cold War. David Hannay was an adept and skilful diplomat: he uses his insider knowledge to describe the workings of the UN and the world of high diplomacy with style and grace. A wonderful resource for all those who want to understand how the United Nations works and why it remains the world's indispensable institution.'

Kofi Annan, United Nations Secretary-General, 1997-2006

Lord Hannay of Chiswick was a diplomat for 36 years. Between 1990 and 1995, he was Britain's ambassador to the UN. Following his retirement from diplomatic service, he served as British Special Representative to Cyprus and was a member of the UN Secretary-General's High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change. He has been Chair of UNA-UK since 2006 and is the author of *Cyprus: The Search for a Solution*.

You can order **New World Disorder** at www.ibtauris.com/promotions or by calling 01256 302 699.

UNA-UK members are entitled to a **35 per cent discount** (normal retail price £25). The promotional code is X48.

The UN Online

- UN Radio Classics is an online archive of documentary and dramatic programmes, starring the likes of Audrey Hepburn, Kirk Douglas and Bing Crosby, which offers a unique way of experiencing key moments in the UN's history.
www.un.org/radio/library/classics
- The UN Statistics Division has created a single entry point for 14 databases and six glossaries containing statistics from member states on a range of topics, including population, energy and trade.
<http://data.un.org>
- Visit this website to download campaign materials to help you commemorate the 60th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.
www.un.org/events/humanrights/udhr60
- 'UN Peace Operations: Year in Review 2007' provides an overview of the UN's peace-keeping activities and a summary of changes to its work in this area, both at headquarters and in the field.
www.un.org/Depts/dpko/dpko
- UNEP has launched the Climate Neutral Network to bring together states, local authorities and companies engaged in the effort to bring about zero emissions economies, communities and businesses.
www.climateneutral.unep.org
- The Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights has a new-look website, featuring recent speeches and op eds by the High Commissioner, pithy factsheets on different human rights issues, and guides for helping vulnerable groups use United Nations procedures to protect their human rights.
www.ohchr.org
- One in three women in the world is likely to be subjected to violence in her lifetime. The Secretary-General has launched a campaign to end violence against women, in conjunction with the opening of the 52nd session of the Commission on the Status of Women.
www.un.org/women/endviolence
- The UN has launched a new website on reform. The site brings together key documents on UN reform as well as information about initiatives to strengthen the world body's capacity to deliver in the areas of development, peace and security, human rights, humanitarian assistance and management.
www.un.org/reform

Letters

send your letters to:

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



Know your enemy

It may seem extraordinary for a UNA-UK member to recommend *Surrender is Not an Option: Defending America at the United Nations and Abroad*. Its author, John Bolton, is not a critical friend of the UN. He is just critical.

His combativeness ensured he was the US's ambassador to the UN for just 500 days in 2005-2006. Now that he has gone why should we care about his retrospective polemic? Two reasons. First, he could easily return if there is another Republican presidency – 'we the peoples' should know our enemy and even learn from him. Second, the book contains a number of good examples of how the UN, and especially the Security Council, actually operates in a crisis.

Bolton sees the UN as 'a target-rich environment'. Prominent on his hit-list are the 'true believers' – those who are 'high-minded' about the UN Charter (UNA members?). His British colleagues are also savaged, with Jack Straw, then Foreign Secretary, and Sir Emyr Jones Parry, the UK's ambassador to the UN at the time, getting a pasting. Bolton speculates that the Foreign Office strategy for dealing with the

UK's 'tenuous claim to permanent member status' involved 'constantly abasing itself before the G-77'.

Britain gets off lightly compared to the UN itself. According to Bolton, the General Assembly is a complete waste of time, though he concedes grudgingly that the Security Council 'actually worked halfway decently from time to time'. For Secretary-General Kofi Annan and his *chef de cabinet* Mark Malloch Brown (now Lord Malloch-Brown in our Foreign Office) there is little appreciation. Annan's wide-ranging reform proposals in *In Larger Freedom* are denigrated as a 'grab-bag of ideas'; the entire project is dismissed as 'in larger Kofi', passed off as an attempt by Annan to rebuild his reputation after the Iraq Oil-for-Food scandal. If someone criticises him – even obliquely, as Malloch Brown did on the selection of the new Secretary-General – Bolton erupts: Malloch Brown, in Bolton's words, is 'a petty bureaucrat' intent on assailing the United States.

This book's style is as angry and brusque as its author. But if you set that aside you could learn an awful lot about how the UN functions. One little snipet that will alarm many NGO members – and Bolton hates NGOs almost with-

out exception – is that America's National Rifle Association (the NRA) is an accredited United Nations NGO.

Chris Dickenson

East Gloucestershire

Visit www.una.org.uk/resources.html for a review of this book by Sir Brian Urquhart, former United Nations Under-Secretary-General.

World Press Freedom Day

Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights enshrines freedom of expression as a fundamental human right. This year's World Press Freedom Day – marked annually on 3 May – will explore how freedom of expression and access to information feed into the empowerment of individuals and wider development objectives.

A free and open press is an essential component of a democratic society. I believe that we should appreciate the work of the media, especially those who are involved in investigative journalism, because the journalists sometimes expose issues which our politicians and leaders would like to cover up. An example of this was the media's role in uncovering the flawed information used to justify the war in Iraq. Very often journalists put themselves at great personal risk: 171 journalists were killed in 2007. These unconscionable acts violate the human rights of individuals and undermine democracy by compromising the flow of information.

Another fundamental human right is that to privacy. In my opinion, the UK has become a surveillance society. Confidential information about millions of people has recently been lost. I believe that these incidents may not have come to light if it had not been for the vigilance, openness and freedom of our press. On 3 May, therefore, we should support the media and acknowledge the role of journalists in upholding human rights.

David J. Thomas

Porthcawl Mid Glamorgan



John Bolton defending American interests in the Security Council

Photo courtesy of the US Department of State

A financial boost from the FCO



Sam Daws
UNA-UK Executive
Director

I am delighted to announce that UNA-UK has received a significant increase in funding from the FCO for 2008-2009: £104,000 towards an agreed programme of seminars, conferences and reports on the UN's work.

Part of this money will go to organising one major conference on climate change in each nation of the UK. See page 2 for details. If your region or branch would like to hold its own climate change event UNA-UK can supply you with an excellent set of background papers.

Members will find in this issue of *New World* a brand new UNA-UK publication – *The Guide to UNYSA*. If you are at university or at school, use this to help you set

up a UNYSA if one does not already exist. Or, if you know an enterprising student who could be encouraged to establish a group, please pass this resource on. The UNYSA guide is the first of a plethora of resources UNA-UK will be producing for use by members in their campaigning and educational work. New membership recruitment material is also in the works.

A warm welcome to Rich Nelmes, UNA-UK's new Membership & Fundraising Officer (see page 3). I know members will make him feel at home.

I would also like to pay tribute to Bruce Robertson for his wonderful service to UNA-UK. We wish him well on his retirement.

UNA-UK

The United Nations Association of the UK



UNA-UK 63rd Annual Conference

Over the weekend of 28-30 March 2008, Exeter

University became a centre for debate about the role of the UN in the international system. UNA-UK members and supporters from around the UK threw themselves into Conference's key task: agreeing a set of policy recommendations for the year ahead.

See opposite page to find out how you can get your copy of the 2008 policy document.

The keynote speech was delivered on Sunday

morning via live video link by Lord Malloch-Brown, currently FCO Minister for the UN and former Deputy Secretary-General of the UN. Lord Malloch-Brown emphasised the centrality of the UN to the UK's foreign policy, and talked about the differences between his current position and his service at the UN. He praised the Prime Minister's engagement in UN reform, and gave an overview of the FCO's new strategic framework under Foreign Secretary David Miliband, in which the strengthening of international institutions has become a main policy goal.

See opposite page for details of how to order a free DVD of Lord Malloch-Brown's speech to Annual Conference.

Another high point of Conference was the 'UN quiz' staged after dinner on Saturday night. Intended as light entertainment, the quiz precipitated fierce competition, and culminated in a tense tie-breaker. Expect this to become a new Annual Conference tradition!

See opposite page to find out how you can take the UN quiz yourself.

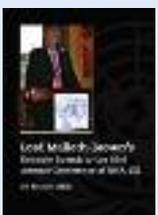


Annual Conference resources



TOWARDS A STRONG, CREDIBLE AND EFFECTIVE UNITED NATIONS: POLICY DOCUMENT 2008

If you are a member, your copy of the policy document will be enclosed with this issue of New World. Otherwise you can download it at www.una.org.uk/annualconference.html or request a hard copy from Rich Nelmes, UNA-UK's Membership & Fundraising Officer, on 020 7766 3456 or nelmes@una.org.uk



KEYNOTE SPEECH BY LORD MALLOCH-BROWN

UNA-UK has produced a DVD of the Annual Conference 2008 keynote speech, given by Lord Malloch-

Brown. This includes footage of the question-and-answer session, as well as a selection of photos showing UNA members in action.

The DVD is available for free to UNA members. To obtain a copy contact Natalie Samarasinghe on 020 7766 3457 or samarasinghe@una.org.uk



UN QUIZ

The UN quiz held at Annual Conference can be downloaded at www.una.org.uk/annualconference.html. You can request a hard copy from Rich Nelmes,

UNA-UK's Membership & Fundraising Officer, on 020 7766 3456 or nelmes@una.org.uk



THE PEACEKEEPERS

The acclaimed documentary 'The Peacekeepers' was screened at Annual Conference. Branches are encouraged to borrow a copy for use

in local activities. This double DVD edition comes with a study guide. To request a copy contact Mark Rusling on 020 7766 3459 or rusling@una.org.uk

Quotes from Conference

LORD HANNAY OF CHISWICK, UNA-UK CHAIR

[Report to UNA-UK Annual Conference by the Chair of the Board of Directors](#)

For UNA-UK it has, I believe, been a year of considerable achievement, one in which all of our small headquarters staff have been extremely active, one in which we have increased both the scope and effectiveness of our advocacy work, one in which we have strengthened our governance, and one in which all parts of the Association – the general membership, the Young Professionals Network and our network of UNYSAs – have managed to expand. That is a record of which we can all be proud.

LORD MALLOCH-BROWN, FCO MINISTER FOR THE UN

[Keynote speech](#)

If you look at what the Prime Minister has been saying about the UN, you might think that Sam Daws has a secret desk at Number 10. In January, Gordon Brown gave a major speech that announced his vision of the new rules that embrace a new sovereignty for an independent world with international institutions forged in the 1940s renewed for our times and re-tooled for the new challenges ahead.

We are lucky at the moment in that we have a government which really is devoted to this idea, derived not from sentimentality, but out of a clear-headed view that a strong UN fronting a strong multilateral system is the best stage for Britain to play on.

BAN KI-MOON, UN SECRETARY-GENERAL

[Annual message of support to Conference](#)

As one of the United Nations' most dynamic civil society partners, UNA-UK continues to raise awareness of the United Nations and its goals and achievements, to stimulate thought and debate about how best to strengthen the UN's institutions, and to build support in the UK for progressive leadership by the British government at the United Nations.

GORDON BROWN, PRIME MINISTER OF THE UNITED KINGDOM

[Annual message of support to Conference](#)

I am delighted to have the opportunity to express my appreciation for the work of UNA-UK over the past year. I especially welcome UNA-UK's outreach projects with youth and student networks, through which you have helped to foster a better understanding of the role of the UN in an ever-changing world.

DAVID CAMERON, LEADER OF THE BRITISH CONSERVATIVE PARTY

[Annual message of support to Conference](#)

The work and role of the UN continues to dominate international discussion, and UNA-UK is at the heart of this debate in this country. Your contribution to the Conservative Party's policy review, for example, was greatly appreciated.

NICK CLEGG, LEADER OF THE BRITISH LIBERAL DEMOCRAT PARTY

[Annual message of support to Conference](#)

I fully support the work of UNA-UK in promoting the valuable work of the UN. The Liberal Democrats share the goals of UNA-UK to campaign for a strong, credible and effective UN. Strong international institutions underpinned by international law are the best way to ensure that countries work together to tackle common problems.

Annual Conference calls on government to ban cluster munitions

This year's Annual Conference issued a robust condemnation of cluster munitions, calling for an international treaty banning their production and use to be concluded by the end of 2008. Lord Hannay, UNA-UK's Chair, has written to the Foreign Secretary to communicate Conference's position and to urge the government to cease to distinguish between different categories of cluster munitions.

In the letter, Lord Hannay writes:

We are aware that the government has hitherto defended the proposition that only what are called 'dumb' cluster munitions should be banned while what are (wrongly in our view) called 'smart' munitions should not. It is becoming clear now...that the failure rate of these so-called smart munitions to self-destruct is much higher than is generally admitted, and also that all these munitions are totally unsuited and disproportionate for use in present-day warfare, inflicting, as they do, horrendous injuries on innocent civilians.

The final meeting of the Oslo Process – a series of conferences aimed at achieving an international ban on cluster bombs – is taking place in Dublin in May.

Read the letter at: www.una.org.uk/parliament/ouradvocacywork.html

Listings



UNA events, campaigns & initiatives

12 May

UNA LEWISHAM

After a brief AGM, Claude Moraes, MEP for London, will give a talk entitled 'Human Trafficking is the Worst Form of Slavery'. This event will take place at 7.30pm at Lewisham Town Hall in Catford. Entertainment and a light meal will be provided. All are welcome.

Contact: David Hamilton on 020 8690 5108

14 May

UNA EXETER

This branch meeting will take place at Exeter Friends' Meeting House, Wynards Lane at 7pm for 7.30pm. All members are welcome.

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

16 May

UNA NORWICH & DISTRICT

From 1pm in the Friends' Meeting House (Upper Goat Lane, Norwich) John and Hazel Cribb will speak about their experiences of the West Bank. You are welcome to arrive at any time from 12.15pm and to bring a packed lunch. Hot drinks and biscuits will be included in the cover charge of £2.

Contact: David Roberts on 01603 435 790 or unity.eastwards@ntlworld.com

17 May

UNA BEXHILL & HASTINGS

Hazel Dawe, Chair of the Kent Green Party, will give a talk enti-

led 'Bali: what can the UN really do about climate change?'. The event will begin at 11am, with coffee available from 10.30am, and will take place at Parkhurst Hall (behind Sackville Road Methodist Church, Bexhill); enter through the door in Parkhurst Road.

Contact: Allan Bula on 01424 210 410

22 May

UNA WESTMINSTER

The branch will hold its fifth annual conference to mark the International Day of UN Peacekeepers. The event will take place from 10am to 5pm at the Royal United Services Institute, Whitehall, London SW1A 2ET. The keynote speaker will be General Patrick Cammaert, former commander of UN forces in the DRC. At 1pm there will be a wreath-laying ceremony at the Cenotaph.

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

26 May

UNA BEXHILL & HASTINGS

A coffee morning, featuring an open organic fruit and vegetable garden, will take place from 10am to 12pm at 13 Thornbank Crescent, Bexhill-on-Sea TN39 3ND. The entrance fee of £1.50 includes coffee and home-made biscuits.

Contact: Allan Bula on 01424 210 410

27 May

UNA OXFORD

Dr Rana Mitter will give a talk entitled 'How China's past is shaping its present and future'. The event will take place at the Friends' Meeting House (43 St Giles) from 5.30pm to 6.45pm.

Contact: Neville Shepherd on 01865 761 630 or neville.shepherd@metronet.co.uk

3, 10, 17 and 24 June

UNA MERTON

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

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

11 June

UNA EXETER

The branch is hosting a question time on international affairs. The speaker will be Professor Neil Armstrong, Deputy Vice Chancellor of the University of Exeter. The event will take place in the Music Room, Exeter Central Library, at 7pm for 7.30pm.

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

14 June

UNA NORWICH & DISTRICT

Norwich & District branch will celebrate its 60th birthday with an anniversary lunch at the Norfolk Club, 17 Upper King Street, Norwich. The guest of honour will be Lord Hannay of Chiswick, UNA-UK's Chair. Tickets must be booked in advance.

Contact: David Roberts on 01603 435 790 or unity.eastwards@ntlworld.com

28 June

UNA LONDON & SE REGION

The region's Summer Council meeting will take place from 12.45pm to 4.30pm in the Kinema, South African High Commission (Trafalgar Square,

London WC2N 5DP), by kind permission of Her Excellency Dr Lindiwe Mabuza, the South African High Commissioner. The theme of this meeting is 'The Universal Declaration of Human Rights: The Way Forward'.

Contact: Neville Grant on 020 8858 8489 or neville.grant@gmail.com

UNA OXFORD

Dr Peter Carey will give a talk entitled 'Win some, lose some: reflections on the struggle for human rights and justice in Burma and East Timor, 1975 to present'. This event will take place at the Friends' Meeting House (43 St Giles, Oxford) from 3pm to 5pm.

Contact: Neville Shepherd on 01865 761 630 or neville.shepherd@metronet.co.uk

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

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

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

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

Universal Declaration of Human Rights 60th anniversary concert

On 4 July UNA Westminster will host a concert to mark UDHR60 at St John's, Smith Square, considered one of London's finest concert venues and a masterpiece of the English Baroque.

Exciting young pianist Libor Novacek will play music by Haydn, Brahms and Liszt, and acclaimed acapella octet Voices8 will sing works by composers ranging from Orlando Gibbons to George Gershwin.

The event will also feature a specially commissioned 15-minute play. 'How the Universal Declaration was won' imagines a chance encounter between Eleanor Roosevelt, René Cassin and former colleagues six years after the Declaration's adoption in 1948. McCarthyism and the Cold War have led to stalemate at the UN and have frustrated the Declaration's implementation.

Prices range from £8 to £15 (concessions £6). Booking opens on 2 June. You will be able to book online; by telephone, post or fax; or in person at the St John's, Smith Square box office. More information about booking can be found on the St John's, Smith Square website (www.sjss.org.uk) or by calling the box office on 020 7222 1061.

For more information about this event, contact David Wardrop on 020 7385 6738 or info@unawestminster.org.uk



What else is going on?

12 May OVERSEAS DEVELOPMENT INSTITUTE

The role of the IMF in low-income countries and the role of low-income countries in the IMF: Time for a change?

The speaker is Masood Ahmed, Director of the External Relations Department at the International Monetary Fund and Chair of the IMF Working Group on Low-Income Countries. The event will take place from 1pm to 2.15pm, in the Boothroyd Room, Portcullis House, Victoria Embankment, London SW1A 2LW.

For more information visit www.odi.org.uk/events

15 May LSE

AIDS: Exceptionalism Revisited

Dr Peter Piot, Executive Director of UNAIDS, will be speaking between 6.30pm and 8pm in the Old Theatre, Old Building, LSE. The event is free and open to all with no ticket required. Entry is on a first-come, first-served basis.

For more information contact the LSE Events Office on events@lse.ac.uk or 020 7955 6043.

16 May LONDON BUSINESS SCHOOL RESPONSIBLE BUSINESS CLUB Annual Careers Conference

This event is an opportunity to meet business leaders and learn how their careers have become increasingly focused on issues of responsibility and sustainability. Participating organisations include Accenture, Cadbury-Schweppes, HSBC, the UN Development Programme and Unilever.

For further details and to buy tickets, please visit www.londonresponsiblebusiness.org.uk

16-17 May INTERNATIONAL LAW ASSOCIATION Does International Law Mean Business – A Partnership for Progress?

This two-day event – the 2008 annual conference of the British branch of the International Law Association – is being hosted by Clifford Chance. The conference will ask whether we can conceive of an international legal order in which business participates as a partner – alongside governments and international organisations – in confronting the challenge of moving fragile states and their peoples, through sustainable development, to peace, security and prosperity. Keynote speakers will include Paul Collier, Professor of Economics at Oxford University, and John Ruggie, Professor of International Relations at

Harvard University and the UN Secretary-General's Special Representative on Human Rights and Business.

For more details visit www.cliffordchance.com/expertise/events

18 May JUBILEE DEBT CAMPAIGN Journey to Justice

In May 1998, 70,000 people formed a human chain in Birmingham to demand debt relief by the G8. On 18 May 2008 the Jubilee Debt Campaign will pay tribute to this day, assess the impact of debt cancellation thus far, and call for a lasting solution to unsustainable and unfair debt. This major event will take place at the International Convention Centre in Birmingham, and will feature a range of participants, including Shahid Malik MP, Minister for International Development; Kumi Naidoo, Chair of the Global Call to Action Against Poverty; Dr Hany El-Banna, President of Islamic Relief; and the Most Reverend Njongonkulu Ndungane, former Archbishop of Cape Town and now President of African Monitor. To find out more, visit www.journeytojustice.org

16 June INTERNATIONAL RESCUE COMMITTEE 2008 Annual Lecture

António Guterres, UN High Commissioner for Refugees,

will give a talk entitled 'People on the Move: The Challenges of Displacement in the 21st Century'. The event will take place from 7pm at the Royal Geographical Society, 1 Kensington Gore (Exhibition Road entrance), London SW7 2AR. Tickets to the lecture cost £15 (concessions £8); for £30 you can attend both the lecture and the post-lecture reception.

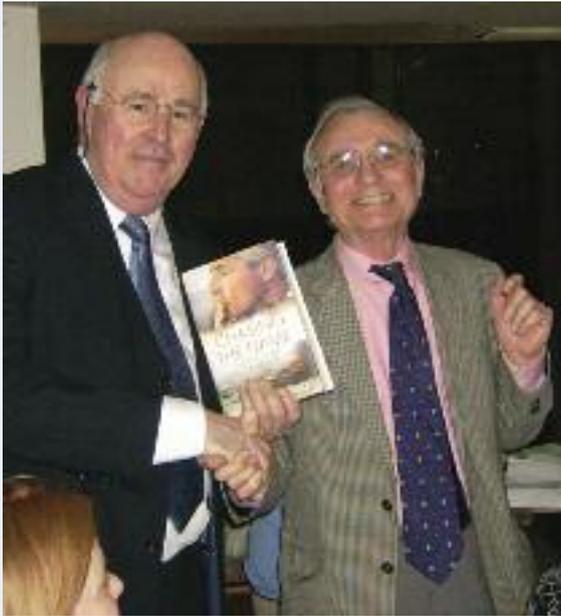
For reservations call the IRC-UK events line on 020 7692 2737 or visit www.theirc.org.uk

16-17 June SOAS CENTRE FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDIES AND DIPLOMACY Third Annual Conference on a WMD-Free Zone in the Middle East

The conference will take place from 10am on 17 June in the Brunei Lecture Theatre at SOAS. Government representatives will outline their positions on the zone; expert presentations will follow. The main conference will be preceded by a keynote speech the evening before (16 June) by Ambassador Jayantha Dhanapala, former UN Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs. The speech, entitled 'The Urgency of Disarmament', will begin at 5.15pm, also in the Brunei Lecture Theatre. The event is free.

To find out more visit www.cisd.soas.ac.uk

Bruce Robertson retires



Bruce Robertson has retired, after nearly nine years as London & South-East Regional Development Officer. On 9 April the region held a dinner in his honour at the Thai Pavilion in Lambeth. Keith Hindell (right) presented Bruce with a copy of *Chasing the Flame*, a biography of Sergio Vieira de Mello.

Bruce will be missed by the region and former colleagues at UNA-UK. We all wish him the best in his retirement!

Photo © Donald Coker-Gibbs

World Refugee Day 2008: People on the Move

The refugee challenge in the 21st century is changing rapidly. Some 40 million people worldwide are already uprooted by violence and persecution, and in the future it is likely that more people will be on the run as a growing number of push factors combine to cause further forced displacement.

Today people do not just flee persecution and war but also injustice, exclusion, environmental pressures, competition for scarce resources and all the miserable human consequences of dysfunctional states. The task facing the international community in this new environment is to find ways to unlock the potential of refugees who have so much to offer if given the opportunity to regain control over their lives.

World Refugee Day (WRD), celebrated each year on 20 June, is an occasion to focus attention on those tens of millions of refugees and others who have been forcibly displaced, and to highlight their urgent needs – from water and shelter to protection and tolerance.

Join UNHCR in marking WRD 2008. Visit www.unhcr.org for more information

EILEEN DAFFERN, a long-standing UNA member described by Jeremy Paxman as 'a force to be reckoned with in the campaign against nuclear weapons', has written an autobiography. Essays on a Life: Politics, Peace and the Personal is available from www.amazon.co.uk

A review of the book is posted at www.una.org.uk/nations_regionsbranches

A service of thanksgiving was held on 5 April for Michael Durkin, former Regional Development Officer for Central Region. Gillian Briggs spoke at the occasion on behalf of the UNA-UK Board of Directors and Central Region.

Ian Gascoigne, a committed member from UNA Southern Region, has sadly also died. Fanny Lines has written an obituary. For a copy, contact Rich Nelmes on 020 7766 3456 or nelmes@una.org.uk

The Membership at Work . . .

UNA Edinburgh

Liz Sim reports on the branch's trust-building work with UNA-Iran.

For three days in January, UNA Edinburgh was host to an unprecedented event: UNA-Iran's first visit to the UK. UNA-Iran was represented by its president, Yadollah Mohammadi, along with Hossein Ahmadyadih and Mahmood Tavana, both of whom are international lawyers and founding members of the association.

We wanted to come to know and understand each other better, and to consider issues of common interest. We found our guests to be friendly, open, frank and unfailingly courteous, with a light sense of humour. Each side felt free to question the other, often quite bluntly, and responses were honest and based on respect.

Inevitably the 'hot topic' of Iran's nuclear programme came up, and it was very instructive to see this from an Iranian perspective. Our guests pointed out that Iran has since 1974 used the annual meeting of the UN General Assembly to call for the establishment of a nuclear-weapons-free zone in the Middle East. Both UNAs agreed to make this a common objec-

tive and stressed their opposition to all nuclear weapons.

We also discussed areas of mutual interest and future collaboration. Both associations undertake notable educational work: UNA Edinburgh runs an annual Model UN General Assembly, while UNA-Iran works with UN agencies in Tehran to teach over 65,000 school students and teachers about the objectives and functions of the UN and its agencies. We proposed an exchange, with a team from Edinburgh participating in a Model UN in Iran, and a team from Iran participating in an Edinburgh event.

The experience of this joint meeting strengthened our conviction that personal encounter and dialogue, including listening with respect to others' perspectives, are indispensable for building improved relationships and a more peaceful world.



Photo courtesy of UNA Edinburgh

A promising start



Richard Broadbent
YPN Steering Committee

If the first quarter of 2008 is to serve as an indication of things to come, YPN has an eventful year ahead. We were privileged to be addressed by Foreign Secretary David Miliband at the formal launch of our 2008-2009 programme on 12 March. Both the UN & the Law and the Working for Peace groups have since staged successful events. The Business & the MDGs team is working on an initia-

tive to widen and deepen UK corporate participation in the UN Global Compact.

YPN also has a new website! It includes more information about our work, new interactive features, and additional resources to help you learn more about what it takes to get a job at the UN.

Let us know what you think!

David Miliband addresses YPN

On 12 March the Network held a reception in the Locarno Rooms of the Foreign & Commonwealth Office to launch its 2008-09 programme of activities. After opening addresses from Sam Daws (UNA-UK Executive Director) and Paul Johnston (Head of the FCO International Security Directorate), the British Foreign Secretary, David Miliband, delivered remarks to the audience of over 200 young professionals. Andrew Smith,

Chair of the YPN Steering Committee, concluded with a brief overview of YPN's goals for the year ahead.

Visit www.una.org.uk/ypn to watch a video of the event and view more photos

The Foreign Secretary blogged about the event the following day. Read his comments at www.fco.gov.uk

YPN
Young Professionals Network



Photo © Marcus Dawes

'I think that it is really tremendous to see so many younger people disproving the simplistic adage that people don't care about politics, that politics can't achieve change, that people are more interested in their own lives than in other people's lives.'

I take strength from the fact that so many of you have decided to come together in support of the ideals of the UN, and also that you're trying to make a practical difference. It's one thing to say 'join an organisation because you believe in its values' and another to say 'join an organisation to deliver some change'.

I think the projects that you're doing in respect of preventing conflict, the work that you're doing on corporate social responsibility in the world of business, I think those are ways of engaging not just the heads of people, but their hearts as well.'

David Miliband MP, Foreign Secretary

THE YPN INTERVIEW:

Dr Cathy
Gorman-Heenan,
Northern Ireland



time in Egypt and the West Bank learning Arabic – although I admit I was never very good at it. My strong accent probably didn't help!

How did you get to where you are today?

By staying at university for what feels like forever! I have an undergraduate degree in politics from Queens University, Belfast; an MPhil from Oxford University; and a PhD in history and international affairs from the University of Ulster.

I also spent a year as a Kennedy Scholar at the Kennedy School of Government and Public Policy at Harvard University. This was one of my best years ever – I learned so much, took classes in negotiation analysis and Arabic, and made some great friends!

I then came back to Northern Ireland to look for work. I got a job as the researcher on INCORE's Conflict Data Service, an internet service on peace and conflict issues. I did some teaching while I was in the post, and things just developed from there.

What do you do?

I am a lecturer at the University of Ulster in Northern Ireland. I teach classes on government and public policy in the UK, but my areas of specialism are ethnic conflict, the management of peace processes, state crime, and conducting research in violently divided societies. I am also an associate of INCORE, a centre for international conflict research which is a joint initiative of the University of Ulster and the UN University in Tokyo.

What do you most enjoy about your job?

I get great job satisfaction from teaching. I always learn so much from my students, especially at the INCORE International Summer School – students of at least 20-30 nationalities take part each year!

Most of these students have worked 'in the field' in a range of conflict zones and so the exchange of experiences is always fascinating. Most of them come to Northern Ireland to understand more about the peace process here, so we spend a lot of time comparing cases and trying to draw lessons from them.

What is the greatest challenge that you face in your role?

Apart from balancing my teaching and research commitments, I would say that my biggest challenge is how to engage many of our younger 'non-specialist' students in appreciating the relevance of world politics. There is huge political apathy among young people; the falling turnout at elections in the UK is a stark illustration.

Finding the time and space for international field research is also challenging. Before I had a family, it was relatively easy for me to hop on a plane to conduct some research in the West Bank or Gaza for example. Now there needs to be a lot more planning on my part!

What inspires you to do what you do?

I was born and raised in Northern Ireland. I remember that, while I was at university here studying politics, a professor told me that the world was a much bigger place than Northern Ireland: if I wanted my opinions on this conflict to be taken seriously, I was advised, I would need points of reference from other conflicts around the world. So, I went to Oxford University and took an MPhil in modern Middle Eastern studies. I also spent

What has been your greatest professional achievement to date?

There are many things which I'm proud of in my career but the publication of my first book – *Political Leadership and the Northern Ireland Peace Process* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2007) – stands out. My teaching efforts have also resulted in some professional successes over the past two years. In 2006, I won the UK Political Studies Association's Bernard Crick Award for Outstanding Teaching in the new entrant category. Then, in 2007, I was awarded a University of Ulster Distinguished Teaching Fellowship Award.

What advice do you have for other young professionals wanting to follow a similar path to yours?

The very best teachers are those with plenty of field experience. It's hard to be passionate about something that you have not experienced first hand. There may be many other young professionals with similar educational qualifications; your 'edge' will always be determined by how much exposure you have had to the very issues that you are researching and teaching.

What do you think of the UN's role in fostering sustainable peace?

The UN primarily considers peacebuilding as an activity which occurs after preventive diplomacy, peacemaking and peacekeeping. But this linear view raises important questions. When, exactly, is the best time to build peace? After a cessation of physical violence? After a peace accord has been signed? At any point in the cycle of conflict?

The notion that there is a particular time to engage in peacebuilding initiatives is being challenged. Some argue that the narrow interpretation and operationalisation of peacebuilding activities in a post-conflict environment fails to acknowledge the fundamental reality that peacebuilding can take place in the absence of any formal peace agreement, or in the event that fledging peace agreements fail.

Any comments on this interview?

Send them to ypn@una.org.uk

Peace versus Justice – can we have both?

On 16 April, YPN's UN & the Law initiative collaborated with the Under-35s Forum of Chatham House to hold its first major event. Juan Méndez, the former Special Adviser to the UN Secretary-General on the Prevention of Genocide, gave the main address, highlighting the tension between peace and justice in post-conflict situations but arguing that both were ultimately possible.

Alex Loden, a legal adviser and YPN member, then shared his views, drawing on his practical experience working on transitional justice initiatives in Liberia and Sierra Leone. Elizabeth Wilmshurst, head of Chatham House's international law programme, chaired the event.

www.una.org.uk/ypn/un_andthelaw.htm



Photo © Chatham House/UNA-UK

Controversy about the Congo

On 22 April, Working for Peace was scheduled to hold a screening and discussion of 'Congo: Children of the Genocide' – a film about the ongoing ethnic clashes in the eastern region of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). Part of the acclaimed Unreported World series, the film traces the origins of the conflict back to the international community's flawed response to the Rwandan genocide of 1994 and highlights the implications for future interventions aimed at preventing mass civilian killings.

Alas a technical problem meant that the film could not be shown! But the event went ahead anyway and was by all accounts marked by intense discussion of the issues raised by the film. The film's presenter, Sam Kiley, was on hand to share his perspectives of the crisis. He was joined by Marie-Claire Faray-Kele, a campaigner for peace and women's rights in the DRC, as well as Mark Lancaster MP, Shadow Minister for International Development, who has served in peacekeeping missions in both Kosovo and Bosnia.

www.una.org.uk/ypn/work4peace.htm

Getting British companies to mean business

The Business & the MDGs group is leading a YPN initiative to promote wider and deeper commitment to the UN Global Compact among British businesses.

The Global Compact is the world's largest global corporate citizenship initiative. It provides a voluntary framework for responsible business practice that not only contributes to broad-based development and sustainable markets, but also encourages the private sector to take action in support of wider UN goals, such as the MDGs. Companies that sign up to the Compact commit to aligning their operations and strategies with 10 universally accepted principles in the areas of human rights, labour, the environment and anti-corruption.

www.una.org.uk/ypn/business_mdgs.htm



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In with the new



Mark Rusling
UNA-UK Campaigns
& Education Officer

I hope that your preparations for exams are going smoothly. The last few months have been busy. In March UNYSA held its annual conference at Birmingham University. With speaker and interactive training sessions and a screening of the acclaimed DVD 'The Peacekeepers', a stimulating time was had by all.

Delegates also elected a new Youth Council for 2008-2009. Brief profiles of the new members are included below. The seven members, whose nationalities cover four continents, reflect UNYSA's wide diversity. I would like to thank the outgoing

council for all their hard work, and to wish the incoming group under Marco Moraes the best of luck.

This summer, UNA-UK will, for the second year running, team up with Life-Link Ghana to help organise a major Model UN initiative in that country. We are looking for UNYSA members with extensive Model UN experience to apply to travel to Ghana during July and August to help with this project, which uses Model UN to impart public speaking and IT skills. Flights, food and accommodation will be covered. Further details are available at www.una.org.uk/youth

Your new Youth Council



Marco Moraes: President

Marco hails from São Paulo and is a second-year international relations student at the London School of Economics, where he is President of the UNYSA. He wants to promote the expansion of UNYSA branches throughout the UK and represents UNYSA on the UNA-UK Board.



Marek Zaremba-Pike: Secretary

Marek is a Polish-Scottish second-year student of Russian studies and international relations at Birmingham University. He ensures the efficient running of the council and would like UNYSA to develop partnerships with other youth organisations.



Avnish Raichura: Education Officer

Avnish, who grew up in Kenya, is an international relations student at Leeds University and former Chair of Leeds UNYSA. This is his second year as Education Officer: in his first year he successfully piloted a UNYSA education outreach initiative in Leeds, and this year hopes to get the programme implemented across most UNYSA branches.



Tuuli Hongisto: Campaigns Officer

Originally from Helsinki, Tuuli is a final year politics and international relations student at the University of Westminster. She would like to inspire and empower all UNYSA members to campaign and make a difference in their universities, workplaces and local communities. She is also the UK representative to 'Making Commitments Matter', a UN initiative designed to monitor and evaluate national youth policy.



Faizan Bhat: Model UN Officer

Faizan is a student of computer engineering and business management at the University of Birmingham. He got involved in Model UN events at Northeastern University in Boston, USA and hopes to promote the use of Model UN nationwide.



Luke Harman: Co-opted member

Luke, from the UK, is currently in his final year studying for an MA in international relations at the University of St Andrews. Last year he served as Youth Council President; this year, as a co-opted member, he hopes to promote greater cohesion and cooperation among branches.



Noorin Dahya: Co-opted member

Noorin is a Canadian-Spanish biochemical engineering student at University College London, with a background in environmental conservation. Her role will involve helping to promote cooperation between branches and the Youth Council.

To contact any member of the Youth Council, e-mail unysa@una.org.uk

UNYSA
United Nations Youth and Student Association



UNYSA 2008 Annual Conference

Marek Zaremba-Pike is Secretary of the UNYSA Youth Council

This year's UNYSA Conference was a fantastic success. Over 80 members from throughout the UK attended the event, held on Saturday, 8 March in Birmingham University's European Research Institute. UNA-UK provided travel subsidies to all delegates, through funding provided by the Foreign & Commonwealth Office.

The programme featured interesting speakers and covered both substantive and practical topics. Peter Kessler, the UN Refugee Agency's Senior External Affairs Officer in the UK, told us about the challenges of supporting all aspects of refugee camp life for decades after a crisis has been forgotten by the media. UNA-UK Executive Director Sam Daws, who was previously First Officer in the Executive Office of Secretary-General Kofi Annan, then gave an overview of the different ways of gaining employment with the UN.

After lunch, Professor Sir Richard Jolly, a former UNA-UK chair, gave a passionate speech about the Millennium Development Goals. Sir Richard is former Deputy Executive Director of UNICEF, architect of the Human Development Report and a firm believer in the UN's potential to build a better world. Fired up with enthusiasm, members were then given tips on campaigning through the media by Linda Jones, author of *The Greatest Freelance Writing Tips in the World*.

UNYSA members then moved onto the business of electing their Youth Council for 2008-2009 – not easy given that the positions were heavily contested! The conference ended with a documentary about the Rochdale Peace Parade, an annual event to mark the UN's International Day of Peace. Delegates left the conference equipped with big ideas to motivate their branches.

The new members of the Youth Council would like to thank last year's members for all their hard work. We would also like to thank UNA-UK for its financial support, as well as Birmingham UNYSA for helping out with the organisation of the event.

We look forward to seeing you all again next year!



Photos © UNA-UK/Benedict Parsons

UN acts to curb 'leading cause of death of young people'

Road traffic injuries are the leading cause of death worldwide for those between the ages of 10 and 24. Almost 1.2 million people are killed each year due to road crashes, with millions more injured or disabled. According to the World Health Organization, if no action is taken, road deaths will rise by 60 per cent by 2020.

Following lobbying by the Commission for Global Road Safety, backed by the WHO, the World Bank and celebrities including Michael Schumacher, the UN General Assembly passed a resolution on 31 March calling on member states to support efforts by low- and middle-income countries in setting national road traffic casualty reduction targets. The debate noted the disproportionate impact of road traffic accidents on poorer social groups, and on the young in particular. A UN ministerial summit on global road safety will be held in Russia in 2009.

For more information, visit www.makeroadssafe.org



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**EVERY
HUMAN
HAS
RIGHTS**

2008 is the 60th anniversary of the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights. To celebrate, individuals – and not just governments – are being asked to sign up to the goals of the Declaration. By doing so, you will pledge your commitment to upholding human rights principles in your daily life and community. Visit www.una.org.uk/UDHR60 to sign up to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.



Every Human Has Rights is a campaign catalysed by The Elders.
www.theelders.org