

# NEW WORLD



**‘WE MUST DELIVER RESULTS’**

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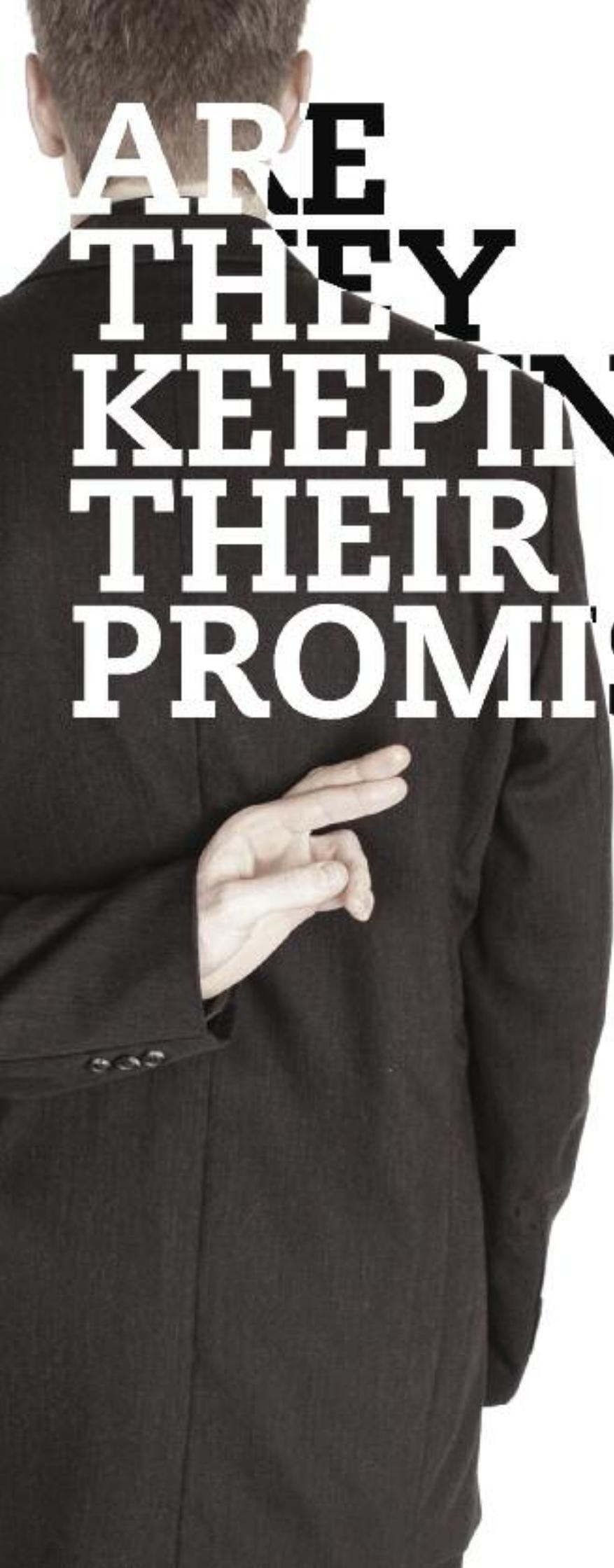
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# ARE THEY KEEPING THEIR PROMISES?

**YOUR MP should be actively holding the government to account in fulfilling the promises it has made on the world stage.**

This September world leaders will convene to renew the push to achieve the UN Millennium Development Goals by 2015. In December the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights will turn 60. The end of 2009 marks the deadline for the UN to broker a new global deal to rein in climate change. And between now and 2010 states will be preparing for a major conference at the UN on the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, which commits states to the ultimate goal of complete nuclear disarmament.

## **LOBBY FOR THE UN 08-09**

is a chance for you to tell your MP about these challenges, their solutions and their impact on the security and well-being of Britons.

### **LAUNCH EVENT: Foreign Press Association 4pm to 5.30pm on Thursday, 23 October**

The launch event will feature speakers and free resources. The Foreign Press Association is located a short walk away from Parliament. You are encouraged to book a meeting with your MP earlier that day to discuss these issues. Participants will be sent a lobby pack containing briefing papers and challenging questions you can put to your MP.

Find out more and sign up at [www.una.org.uk/lobby0809](http://www.una.org.uk/lobby0809)

No internet? Call Mark Rusling on 020 7766 3459 or write to Lobby for the UN, 3 Whitehall Court, London SW1A 2EL.

## Letter from the Editor

In June UNA-UK was thrilled to host the first major public appearance in the UK by UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon. In his speech, the Secretary-General commended UNA-UK's role as a mediator between the world body and the British public, saying that the Association had 'explained the UN to the UK while helping to convey the concerns of British citizens to the UN'.

In Dispatches David Morrison sets the record straight on allegations made against the UN Development Programme when he was its communications director. The chair of UNHCR's Executive Committee, Ambassador van Eenennaam, argues for more help for Iraqi refugees. And Martin Luther Agwai, the force commander for the UN-AU mission in Darfur, describes how a shortage of helicopters is making UNAMID's mission next to impossible.

The UN set up its first peacekeeping mission 60 years ago. Since then many men and women have risked – and lost – their lives to bring peace to war-torn societies. These sacrifices stand in marked contrast to abuses perpetrated by UN peacekeepers against the populations they are sent to protect. This issue's Briefing outlines what steps the UN has taken to prevent these crimes and provide redress to victims.

Veronica Lie, Editor

## From the archive – 20 years ago



### The politics of starvation

**JONATHAN DIMBLEBY** argues that the West may hold the key to a diplomatic solution to the war in Ethiopia.

Starvation has never registered much on the Richter scale of international diplomacy. Unless a strategic interest is threatened, the great powers generally prefer to leave such painful embarrassments to the likes of Bob Geldof, Comic Relief and a motley selection of UN agencies. In the case of Ethiopia this negligence is nudging a nation towards an abyss, the precise contours of which are outlined in an unpublished report by the World Bank: population growth is outstripping food production at such a rate that the 1988 deficit of perhaps 1.5 million tons is projected to grow steadily towards seven million tons by the end of the century, a mere 12 years hence.

By mobilising the entire international relief community it may just be possible to deliver a little over one million tons of relief this year – more than has ever been achieved before. But it is inconceivable that the system could handle more than two million tons a year, even in ideal conditions. Thus, according to the remorseless logic of supply and demand, those victims who survive this emergency will only be spared to starve again. This year seven million people are at risk; by the year 2000 the number will have doubled.

I WEPT only once in Ethiopia: at the sight of a battered Land-Rover with the words 'Gift from the people of North Devon' stamped on the side, a symbol of countless coffee mornings and fun runs with which good people from one world have tried to save hungry people in another. Ethiopia is once again in extremis, facing a cataclysm which hardly bears contemplation.

From *New World*, May/June 1988

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## Introducing Mipe Okunseinde



This summer I am undertaking an internship with UNA-UK. I am assisting with the Association's advocacy and awareness-raising about the UN's role in international law and global governance, and have been producing briefings and website copy. I recently wrote a paper on the 'league of democracies', John McCain's proposal for a new international body based on a democratic alliance – a concept many have criticised because it could undermine the UN. The paper canvasses responses to the proposal, and questions its practicality and desirability. It is posted on the UNA-UK website.

My main interests lie in how countries can develop their own legal systems through 'cross-pollination' with other states. I have worked with law firms and research organisations on three different continents: in South Africa on the right to housing; in Europe on international and European law; and in North America on public interest law and governmental affairs. I hope that my experience at UNA-UK will give me a 'bigger-picture' perspective of these issues.

I have a BA in Psychology from Harvard University, an LLM in European Law from Cambridge University, and will soon be receiving a JD from Harvard Law School.

**Mipe can be reached until the end of August on 020 7766 3448.**

**Please send any e-mail to Mipe via Mark Rusling on [rusling@una.org.uk](mailto:rusling@una.org.uk)**

## Join us . . .

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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The deadline for submission of material for the next issue of *New World* is noon on 3 September 2008

The next issue will cover the period 1 October to 31 December 2008

All submissions should be typed and sent by e-mail where possible to [lie@una.org.uk](mailto:lie@una.org.uk). Photos should ideally be 300 dpi resolution

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## Karadzic appears before UN war crimes tribunal

Described in recent headlines as ‘one of the world’s most wanted war crimes fugitives’, former Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadzic has finally been caught and arrested. After over a decade on the run, Mr Karadzic has been extradited to the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia, where he faces a raft of charges, including 11 counts of genocide, war crimes, crimes against humanity and other atrocities. Mr Karadzic, who made his first appearance in front of the court on 31 July, has said that he intends to conduct his own defence – like Slobodan Milosevic.

UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon hailed the arrest as a ‘decisive step towards ending impunity’ for atrocities committed during the Balkan conflicts of the 1990s. Two other indicted war criminals – Bosnian Serb military chief Ratko Mladic and the Croatian politician Goran Hadzic – continue to elude capture.

## New human rights commissioner confirmed

On 28 July the UN General Assembly confirmed the appointment of South African judge Navanethem Pillay as the next UN human rights chief. She will succeed Louise Arbour.

Ms Pillay has said that she comes to the post ‘with a real understanding of what it’s like to have your human rights violated’. Of Tamil Indian descent, Ms Pillay studied human rights law at Harvard before starting a law practice in apartheid era South Africa in 1967. But her Tamil roots meant that for

28 years she was barred from setting foot in a judge’s chamber. In 1995, with the end of apartheid, Ms Pillay became the first non-white woman to be appointed a South African High Court judge. She then moved to the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda, where she served for eight years – four as its president – before becoming an International Criminal Court judge.

Ms Pillay will take up her post at the UN on 1 September.

## Le Roy to succeed Guéhenno as UN peacekeeping chief

After eight years at the helm of the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations, Jean-Marie Guéhenno is stepping down. During his tenure, Mr Guéhenno oversaw some 20 operations and a record expansion in the presence and activities of UN peacekeepers across the globe.

Mr Guéhenno will be succeeded by Alain Le Roy, also a French national. Mr Le Roy, an engineer, has held a range of positions across public administration, management and international affairs. He has extensive experience of the Balkans, having served with the UN as Deputy Special Coordinator for Sarajevo and Regional Administrator in Kosovo.

Le Roy will take up his new post later this summer.

## Ban Ki-moon gets global vote of confidence

Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon scored best out of a line-up of world leaders in a global opinion poll which put this question to publics of 20 states: ‘How much confidence do you have in each leader to do the right thing regarding world affairs?’

The survey, initiated by the Program on International Policy Attitudes at the University of Maryland, reached nearly 20,000 people from countries that make up 60 percent of the world’s population.

Mr Ban was the only leader to get endorsement – ‘a lot or some confidence’ – in a plurality of countries. Iranians were among those to back the Secretary-General, notable given UN sanctions in place against their country.

## UK re-elected to Human Rights Council

In May the UN General Assembly voted from a pool of 19 candidates to elect 15 states to the UN Human Rights Council. The UK beat Spain by one vote to become one of two representatives of the ‘Western

European and other states’ group. France occupies the other seat.

Of the British re-election Foreign Secretary David Miliband said, ‘The UK stood...because we want to continue to build the Council into the strong and effective body it needs to be.’

Sri Lanka, too, had put itself forward. However, despite mustering 101 votes, the country did not get elected, and the four Asian seats instead went to Japan, Bahrain, South Korea and Pakistan. Human rights campaigners welcomed Sri Lanka’s defeat as a potential deterrent to other human rights abusers contemplating a bid for election.

## Verdict on UN security

An independent panel established to review UN staff security procedures has released its report. The panel, chaired by veteran diplomat Lakhdar Brahimi, was set up in the wake of the terrorist attacks on UN offices in Algiers in December 2007. Seventeen UN staff members were killed.

Underpinning the report’s recommendations was the need to recognise that views of the UN were changing: people in many parts of the world perceive a bias in the organisation, making it a target for Al Qaeda and other extremist groups. The panel therefore called for greater vigilance.

The panel was not mandated to identify individual negligence. However, finding that UN officials ignored credible threats from the Al Qaeda affiliate in the Maghreb, the group recommended that the Secretary-General establish a second panel (now set up) to investigate whether any UN staff member should be held accountable for security lapses.

Meanwhile, Sir David Veness, the UN’s head of security, resigned, stating that he would bear full responsibility for any errors.

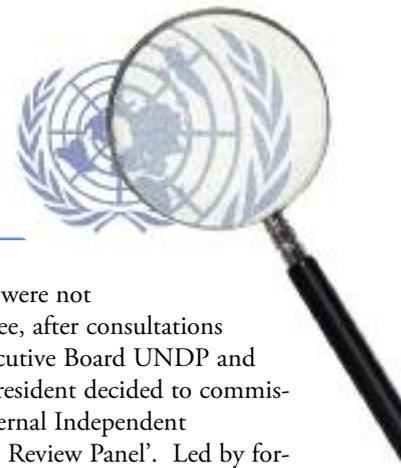
## Zimbabwe sanctions rejected

On 11 July, China and Russia vetoed a draft resolution that would have levied sanctions and an arms embargo on Zimbabwe, in addition to a travel ban and assets freeze on President Mugabe and 13 other persons.

The draft was an attempt to put pressure on Mugabe to end the violence and unrest that have wracked Zimbabwe since the controversial first round and run-off presidential elections that took place earlier this year. The resolution would have also called for a UN special envoy for Zimbabwe.

Sir John Sawers, the UK’s ambassador to the UN, said that by failing to pass the resolution the Security Council had failed the people of Zimbabwe.

# Dispatches



## ‘Cash for Kim’: the UN scandal that wasn’t



David  
Morrison

### Readers of American newspapers

over the past 18 months could be forgiven for thinking that UNDP, the UN’s flagship development agency, had been up to no good in North Korea. Prominent coverage in the *Wall Street Journal*, on Fox News and elsewhere charged that up to \$150 million in UNDP funding may have been diverted in North Korea, perhaps, they suggested ominously, to the country’s nuclear weapons programme. In the view of some, ‘Oil for Food’ had been succeeded by ‘Cash for Kim’.

In early June, however, the third in a series of outside investigations set conventional wisdom on its head by debunking almost all of the charges against UNDP, including that it had retaliated against an employee for ‘blowing the whistle’ on its North Korea programme. Here’s how it happened.

In January 2007, amid allegations by the US Mission to the UN of irregularities in UNDP’s North Korea programme, UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon called for a special audit by the UN’s external Board of Auditors. At the same time UNDP’s Executive Board mandated several changes to UNDP’s operations in the country. At the beginning of March 2007, when it became clear that the North Korean authorities were not going to implement the mandated changes, UNDP suspended its operations and withdrew its staff from Pyongyang.

In May 2007, the external audit found that UNDP and other UN agencies did not operate in North Korea according to

the standards and practices they used elsewhere worldwide, and said that in some cases they had violated their own rules (eg. by accepting local personnel sent by the North Korean government, rather than recruiting them competitively). UNDP’s response pointed out that its operational practices were imposed on it by the North Korean government; dated back 27 years; were known to its Executive Board; and were similar or identical to those followed by other UN agencies, international NGOs and foreign diplomatic missions, including those members of its Executive Board with embassies in Pyongyang. It is also interesting to note that many of these organisations continue to follow these practices today.

## ‘UNDP refuted these charges, pointing out that the sums being alleged were larger than its total resources in the country’

Shortly afterward, the US mission came forward with a new set of very serious allegations, including detailed charges that UNDP had underreported its funding levels; that large amounts of UNDP funding had been diverted by the North Korean authorities; that UNDP had supplied North Korea with potential ‘dual use’ technology; and that UNDP had engaged in illicit transactions with entities tied to the North Korean armaments programme. UNDP refuted these charges, pointing out that the sums being alleged were larger than its total resources in the country, that there was not a single match between alleged payments and its own financial records, and that the documents being used by the US to substantiate its charges contained incorrect UNDP financial codes, suggesting that they had been falsified.

Accusations met rebuttals, triggering new accusations – all of which was covered extensively in the press. As the two

sides clearly were not going to agree, after consultations with its Executive Board UNDP and the Board president decided to commission an ‘External Independent Investigative Review Panel’. Led by former Hungarian Prime Minister Miklos Nemeth, the ‘Nemeth panel’ was asked to get to the bottom of all allegations, including by establishing the facts around charges by a former UNDP employee that he had been fired for ‘blowing the whistle’ on UNDP’s North Korea operations. Relevant parties, including the US mission, agreed to support the panel’s work.

Also in 2007, a sub-committee of the US Senate decided to launch its own investigation. Published in early 2008 in conjunction with a formal hearing, the sub-committee’s report charged UNDP with exercising insufficient financial and administrative controls in North Korea, and with impeding reasonable oversight by failing to share internal audits. It found that the North Korean government had employed ‘deceptive financial practices’ in its use of one of its accounts associated with UNDP, but that the money involved was its own, and that UNDP was unaware of the deception. The Senate report did not find evidence of funding diversion but remained largely silent on many of the specific allegations against UNDP.

This set the stage for the Nemeth panel report as the final word on the controversy. Released on 2 June 2008, the report found that UNDP made slightly over \$1 million in payments to ‘government-related entities’ each year in North Korea, that these payments were related to UN programmes, and that there was ‘no evidence of diversion of funds’. Specific allegations of substantial UNDP payments to a company linked to the North Korean armaments programme were dismissed, as was the central charge that UNDP had retaliated against a ‘whistle-blower’ for taking the charges to the US mission in the first place. The *New York Times* said the Nemeth report ‘appeared to concur with what [UNDP] had maintained all along, that the American allegations were baseless’. Even media usually critical of the UN declared

that the Nemeth report had 'vindicated' UNDP.

UNDP, of course, did not escape criticism. Overall, the report pointed to a need to tighten up or even establish alternative financial and administrative procedures for challenging operational environments such as North Korea. More systematic procedures should also be established for the procurement of potential dual use equipment, and overall, the 'export of dual use items require[s] examina-

tion and analysis on a UN-wide basis so that the legal implications are clarified to all UN agencies'.

On receiving the Nemeth report, UNDP Administrator Kemal Dervis said that while UNDP had been the target of serious allegations, some taking 'fantastic and irresponsible forms', it would always 'remain open to constructive criticism'. Importantly, he stated that while it was clear that the men and women of UNDP, on a whole, were

doing an extraordinary job often in very difficult circumstances, UNDP, as a complex organisation can and should improve further.

In the end, however, there simply was no Cash for Kim.

*David Morrison was UNDP's Director of Communications throughout the 'Cash for Kim' episode. He writes here in a personal capacity.*

## Iraqi refugees need more help now



Boudewijn  
J. van  
Eenennaam

Imagine if your country had to suddenly absorb an influx of refugees equal to 10 per cent of its total population. In the United Kingdom, that would mean the arrival of nearly 6 million people.

That is exactly what has happened to Jordan and Syria, which are now struggling to cope with huge numbers of increasingly desperate Iraqi refugees who have arrived since early 2006. These people are not in refugee camps but are seeking safety in the anonymity of sprawling urban centers such as Damascus and Amman. Difficult to capture on camera, this crisis has largely unfolded out of the media spotlight.

That is why I report what I saw on the ground: that the plight of Iraqi refugees and the host countries trying to help them is much more serious than generally perceived. And it is rapidly deteriorating. The generosity of both countries has placed enormous strains on them and it is now critical that the international community come forward to help. If not, this humanitarian crisis may well have far-reaching consequences for stability in the region and beyond.

I left Amman and Damascus with bleak images of solitary refugees hiding in dark, dingy apartments, fearing detention and deportation, desperate about their future.

They have no legal status, and are not allowed to work. Most have depleted their savings. People sell their meagre belongings just to pay next month's rent; women and girls sell their bodies; parents take their children out of school to help earn money. Sharp increases in oil and food prices further aggravate their misery. All of this on top of the physical and psychological trauma they suffered fleeing Iraq.

We cannot allow this serious humanitarian crisis to be politicised. Those who argue that the United States caused the problem and should therefore fix it, or who object to any assistance to the Syrian regime, totally miss the point. The point is that human beings in such dire circumstances need our help.

**'UNHCR food packages, which keep tens of thousands alive for about \$18 per parcel per month, will soon cost twice that. Do we put in less food? Or diminish the number of recipients?'**

Citing continuing insecurity in Iraq, most refugees are fearful of return, saying it could well result in death. Others say going home is economically unfeasible, their houses having been confiscated and unemployment high. Minorities are especially fearful, noting that they have no means of protecting themselves. The most vulnerable – in particular women and children – are being submitted for resettlement to the UK and 12 other countries.

Because so many refugees remain in hiding, exact figures on the impact of millions of Iraqi refugees on the Syrian and

Jordanian economies are not easy to define, but the cost is estimated in billions of dollars. Both governments cooperate with humanitarian agencies like UNHCR. For the first time, Syria has allowed international non-governmental organisations to operate within its borders.

The governments in Amman and Damascus deserve to be acknowledged for their efforts in dealing with an almost impossible task. But this is not about praise. They deserve real, tangible help from an international community that recognises an obligation to help share the burden and alleviate human suffering.

Despite the hospitality and generosity of both countries, the combination of massive numbers of needy Iraqis, skyrocketing prices, huge pressure on social and economic infrastructure and few immediate prospects for return to Iraq all threaten to push this crisis to the breaking point. Non-governmental organisations have begun to report cases of violence against Iraqi children at Jordanian schools. Fuel prices in Syria have increased by 357 per cent. UNHCR food packages, which keep tens of thousands alive for about \$18 per parcel per month, will soon cost twice that. Do we put in less food? Or diminish the number of recipients? It does not take a pessimist to see the misery. And the risks.

The international community has to help defuse this silently ticking time bomb. The sour fact today is that UNHCR is still facing a funding shortfall of more than £50 million for its Iraqi programme this year. We need to step forward now or the fragile humanitarian space that has been created in the region will vanish and the trust placed in UNHCR and its partners seriously undermined.

*Ambassador Boudewijn J. van Eenennaam of the Netherlands is Chairman of the Executive Committee of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees.*

## There is no peace for us to keep



Martin Luther  
Agwai

With the world fixated on recent events at the International Criminal Court and how they will affect the situation in Sudan, it is important to remember what is happening in Darfur today.

As the force commander of what is destined to be the world's largest peacekeeping operation, I am deeply concerned about the deteriorating security situation here. Peacekeeping has become a deadly business in Darfur.

Late at night on 9 July my peacekeepers were given a task they should never have had to perform. At the village of Dar as Salam in North Darfur they collected the bodies of their fallen colleagues, which had been extracted from nearby Um Hakibah. In the harsh light of pick-up truck headlights they placed their colleagues in body bags for the helicopter flight to our headquarters in Al Fasher.

The despicable attack at Um Hakibah a day earlier, in which we lost seven men from Rwanda, Uganda and Ghana, with 22 wounded, was a grim reminder of the realities of peacekeeping in Darfur for our joint United Nations-African Union mission (UNAMID).

The ambush occurred as one of our convoys was returning from a patrol to investigate allegations made by one of the rebel movements that two of their soldiers had been killed.

These brave men were engaged in a classic peacekeeping operation. It was their fatal misfortune to encounter a group of criminal thugs with total disregard for human life and peace in Darfur. This was a highly organised assault by up to 200 gunmen on horseback and in 40 vehicles equipped with rifles, machine guns and an arsenal of heavy-calibre weapons.

When I first listened to the details of this tragic incident, when I heard of the weapons involved and was told the fire fight lasted more than two hours, it struck me

that this was a report straight out of a war zone. Yet again I asked myself, where is the peace for us to keep? The unpalatable truth is that there is no peace in Darfur. This is a conflict that has now lasted almost as long as World War II, with the prospects of a lasting settlement looking less likely than ever.

How can we move forward from this tragedy? In my mind the attack offers several compelling lessons: for the international community, the rebel movements and the government of Sudan.

First, it is high time the international community honoured its responsibilities to this force. We remain desperately undermanned and poorly equipped. I have about a third of the forces I am supposed to have deployed in Darfur and none of the tactical helicopters that might have prevented the slaughter of our men.

**'We need to be reinforced urgently and given the proper equipment to enable us to complete our mission'**

Our long shopping list of missing equipment makes shameful reading. It should not take the loss of innocent lives to understand what is at stake here. We need to be reinforced urgently and given the proper equipment to enable us to complete our mission.

There is an old adage that 'if it ain't broke, don't fix it'. In Darfur things are broken and they need fixing. In this context we welcome the recent appointment of Djibril Bassolé, Foreign Minister of Burkina Faso, as the new joint mediator to be based alongside UNAMID in Al Fasher. This will certainly help revitalise the ailing peace process.

Yet the international community still needs to come up with new ideas. Some commentators have suggested, for example, that establishing a no-fly zone for Darfur could help stabilise the security situation. This is an extreme step. Some experts believe it would be counter-productive. That is not the point. The essential thing is: we need a debate. Will the international community tolerate the assassination of UNAMID peacekeepers indefinitely?

We also need to look urgently at broadening the participation in this peacekeeping force. Security Council resolution 1769, which gives us our mandate in Darfur, speaks of the 'predominantly African character' of UNAMID. It does not say the peace-

keeping force must be exclusively African. Given the understandable constraints among African contributing nations we should now be able to turn to those non-African countries willing and able to assist our mission at short notice. Darfurians deserve nothing less.

Second, the rebel movements. When the Darfur Peace Agreement (DPA) was signed in 2006 less than a handful of movements were involved in the conflict. Today there are something like 30. As the movements have splintered into new factions, the prospects for a settlement have diminished. For too long these men have escaped censure, benefiting from the international community's almost exclusive focus on the government in Khartoum to deliver peace. In fact they have been positively emboldened by it.

These men with guns do not represent their peoples, the vast majority of whom yearn for peace. Only last month 38 of my peacekeepers were held hostage at gunpoint for more than five hours by armed men from the Sudan Liberation Army (SLA) Minni Minawi faction. This is the one significant rebel movement that signed the DPA. The movements have had it too easy for too long. It is time for them to demonstrate that they are serious about peace. They must lay down their weapons and sit around the negotiating table with the government.

Finally, the Sudanese government should understand that the attack at Um Hakibah is in no one's best interests. Bringing UNAMID into a conflict merely reduces the chances of a sustainable settlement. Allowing more peacekeepers in from more countries, removing real or perceived bureaucratic obstacles to our mission and the humanitarian effort, engaging with the movement, and reining in its reprehensible militia – these all send a powerful message that the government is doing its utmost to bring about peace in Darfur. It will find plenty of partners willing to assist it.

Too many men, women and children have lost their lives in this ruinous war. The worst attack on this peacekeeping mission is a tragic reminder of how this conflict is spiralling out of control. The international community, the rebel movements and the government of Sudan must act now to restore stability and the prospects for peace. I am determined to ensure that my brave peacekeepers killed at Um Hakibah did not die in vain.

*General Martin Luther Agwai is Force Commander of UNAMID.*

## League of Democracies A rival to the UN?

The new club being floated by John McCain raises more questions than answers



Courtesy of DSB Nola: [http://flickr.com/people/derek\\_b/](http://flickr.com/people/derek_b/)

Given the strains which typified the US-UN relationship under the Bush administration, it is understandable that the world is paying attention to the foreign policy visions of the two US presidential candidates. In John McCain's case, one hint of what's to come is his advocacy of a 'league of democracies', a new alliance of like-minded states which could mount a common response to crises when dis-

agreement in the Security Council had hamstrung the UN.

The concept raises a number of questions which underscore the mismatch between the idea and the realities of today's international system. What criteria, for example, will determine eligibility for membership? Who would be excluded? Presumably China and Russia, who are pivotal to international security and global economic stability.

In any case, eligibility to join such a coalition would not necessarily mean interest in joining. Democracies vary widely in terms of social, economic and national security priorities. They may very well value relations with trading partners or regional neighbours over ties with other democratic countries.

Proponents of the concept argue that the league would encompass not just Western democracies but also 'the

world's other great democracies', such as India, Brazil and South Africa. But a quick look at the UN voting records of these states reveals unmistakable anti-interventionist leanings. The contention that a collective of democracies would have been more likely to intervene in, say, Burma or Darfur rests, therefore, on pretty flimsy reasoning.

Perhaps the most misguided argument made by the league's advocates is that an alliance of democracies would enjoy international legitimacy. But the UN's legitimacy derives from the universality of its membership; it is not a product of the internal political arrangements of its member states.

The league of democracies is not the answer to standstills at the UN. The solution, rather, is to strengthen the UN and make it a more credible and effective instrument for cooperative action. Hopefully the next US president will be committed to achieving this goal.

## International Criminal Court Peace versus justice

The ICC's move against the Sudanese president sparks fears for peace in Darfur



Photo © iStockPhoto

17 July was the tenth anniversary of the adoption of the Rome Statute of the ICC. The statute – to which 106 states, including the UK, are currently parties – established the independent, permanent court to try individuals accused of the most serious atrocities.

The court has yet to convict any individual, though ICC Chief Prosecutor Luis Moreno-Ocampo has opened investigations into four situations (the Democratic Republic of the Congo,

Uganda, Central African Republic and Sudan), and the ICC Pre-Trial Chamber has issued 12 warrants of arrest. On 14 July, the prosecutor made his most controversial move yet, and presented evidence against a sitting head of state.

Mr Moreno-Ocampo asked the Pre-Trial Chamber to issue an arrest warrant against Sudanese President Omar Al Bashir, arguing that there are reasonable grounds to believe that he bears criminal responsibility in relation to 10 counts of genocide (the first time this indictment has been sought), crimes against humanity and war crimes in Darfur. Mr Moreno-Ocampo argued, 'His motives were largely political. His alibi was a "counterinsurgency". His intent was genocide.'

The prosecutor's request for the arrest warrant has sparked controversy. The Arab League and African Union have called on the UN Security Council to suspend the ICC's consideration of the claims. At the heart of this

opposition is the worry that the court's quest for justice could scupper chances for peace.

But the purported trade-off between peace and justice may be overstated. During the conflict in the Balkans, the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia issued indictments while fighting was ongoing; few believe that this prolonged the conflict. Indeed, many hope that the ICC action will intensify pressure on Khartoum to alter its behaviour. In principle, the government of Sudan is obliged to turn in its leader to the court, and signatories to the Rome Statute are supposed to arrest Mr Bashir if he enters their territory.

The UN Secretary-General has been careful to emphasise the independence of the ICC, but he has also stated his view that peace and justice are not intrinsically conflicting. On the contrary: 'Justice can be part of the peace process, but peace without justice cannot be sustainable.'

## Maternal Mortality *Dying in vain*

The failure to stem pregnancy-related deaths is holding back MDG progress and violating human rights



Photo © iStockPhoto

by several African countries. Yet most maternal deaths are preventable. Access to emergency care, contraceptives and skilled birth attendants can have a huge impact. In Bangladesh in 2005, just over 20 per cent of deliveries were overseen by skilled attendants: 570 women died per 100,000 live births. In Austria that same year only four women died of pregnancy-related causes – trained attendants were present at 100 per cent of live births.

The state of maternal health in a country gives a good indication of women's overall position in society. Obstetric fistula, one of the most devastating pregnancy-related disabilities affecting over 2 million women, is a telling example. Sufferers – almost all of them in poor countries – tend to be illiterate and malnourished; many are young girls who have been forced into marriage. And the manifestations of this condition – incontinence and, in some case, the inability to have more children – mean that the women are often ostracised by their communities or abandoned by their husbands.

**Lack of progress towards achieving** Millennium Development Goal 5 – improving maternal health – is a major drag on the overall performance of sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia. Maternal mortality has always been a big divider in development terms. In the developing world, one in 16 women die of pregnancy-related complications; in rich countries just one in 3,800 does.

A report produced in June 2008 for the MDG Africa Steering Group, chaired by the UN Secretary-General, forecasts that all goals except the fifth will be met

Like many maternal health problems, fistula is entirely preventable and curable. The injury can be mended through reconstructive surgery – for straightforward cases, the procedure's success rate is as high as 90 per cent. To ensure a successful and sustainable outcome about two weeks of post-operative care are needed. The cost of this, the surgery itself and post-operative counselling to help with social reintegration comes to about \$300.

But it is through prevention rather than treatment that this condition can be eliminated. As with many maternal health problems, the solution depends to a large extent on girls' education and on guaranteeing the right of women to choose themselves when to have children. Ensuring basic access to family planning is therefore vital; this could reduce maternal deaths by a third and child deaths by as much as a fifth.

Paul Hunt, UN Special Rapporteur on the right to health, has said that maternal mortality is 'one of the most serious human rights issues that we face today'. It is high time that it received the attention it needs.



# Grounded

the International Community's  
Betrayal of UNAMID

**A Joint NGO Report**

**As UNAMID, the beleaguered UN-AU peacekeeping force in Darfur, reaches its one-year anniversary, it is nowhere near its mandated size and is critically under-resourced. Particularly debilitating is its lack of helicopters, without which the force faces a huge gap in capacity: it cannot respond rapidly to events and its capacity for protecting civilians is severely constrained.**

**UNAMID has asked for 18 transport helicopters. So far not one country has stepped up. 'Grounded: the International Community's Betrayal of UNAMID' assesses which countries have suitable helicopters and how many are available for Darfur. The report, endorsed by UNA-UK and more than 30 other NGOs, identifies countries with surplus aircraft and calls on them to offer these to UNAMID.**

To read more visit

[www.una.org.uk/r2p](http://www.una.org.uk/r2p)

United Nations Secretary-General  
Ban Ki-moon's speech to UNA-UK  
at the Royal Geographical Society,  
13 June 2008

# 'WE MUST DELIVER RESULTS'

“

It is a pleasure to be back in London and to join so many distinguished friends of the United Nations in this magnificent hall.

Lord Hannay, let me thank you for your generous introduction. You began it by alluding to my baptism by fire. I know what you mean.

The 18 months I have held office have been even more eventful than usual for the UN. During this time, I have learned why the first UN Secretary-General dubbed this the most impossible job on earth, why so many have quoted him since, and why yet others have described it as one with limited influence and unlimited responsibility.

I quickly discovered these doomsayers were right – but also completely wrong. The office of the Secretary-General does have few powers, but that is more than made up for by an organisation with many friends.

These friends – including all of you – exemplify the real power of my position: the ability to call on some of the most extraordinary individuals in public service or private enterprise to support the UN's work.

Nowhere is this more true than in the United Kingdom, a country with a long and distinguished history of engagement with our organisation and its mission. From debt relief to climate change, human rights to UN reform,

the people and government of the United Kingdom have proved reliable advocates for the most pressing issues on the UN's agenda.

For more than six decades, UNA-UK has helped cultivate this support. Through outreach, volunteer efforts, educational initiatives, conferences and seminars, your members have built a grassroots support base for the UN. You have explained the UN to the UK while helping to convey the concerns of British citizens to the UN.

So I am delighted for this opportunity to speak to all of you today about the major issues on our agenda.

Owing to the alignment of a number of developments, we have a unique

opportunity this year to enhance the central role of the United Nations in world affairs.

We must deliver results for a more prosperous and healthy world. Passing the midpoint to the 2015 deadline for the Millennium Development Goals, we face a development emergency. Millions of people are still trapped in structural poverty and go hungry every day. In sub-Saharan Africa, despite pockets of progress, not a single country is on track to achieve the MDGs by 2015.

We must deliver results for a more secure world. This year will put us to new tests in peacekeeping, bringing it to an unprecedented scale, complexity and risk level. Success depends first and foremost on how member states match the mandates they have set with political support and actual contributions – troops, police, vital capabilities and finance.

We must deliver results for a more just world. A global awareness campaign is already underway to mark the 60th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. We must uphold the responsibility to protect, and ensure the Human Rights Council lives up to the high expectations of the international community.

At the same time, the UN must work overall to address the global threats which spare no one in today's world. They require us to advance the global common good by securing global public goods – in the areas of climate change, global health, counter-terrorism and disarmament. The United Nations is uniquely placed to lead this effort – this is my central message to you today.

I am convinced that if we do not collaborate on these four global challenges now, they will escalate to global threats of irreversible proportions in the future. These issues differ qualitatively from all other matters of global concern because: they endanger all countries – rich and poor – and all people; they cross borders and are highly contagious; and they can only be resolved with action by all nations and all peoples.

For friends of the United Nations, the need for collective action represents the silver lining to some very dark clouds: today's complex and global challenges represent exactly the environment in which our United Nations should thrive – because no country can resolve these problems on its own. They signal a world where the United Nations can, and must, grow and take on new roles, develop and deliver on new fronts.

And that is exactly what our organisation is doing. Take climate change, which I personally consider the defining challenge of our age.

Last December, in the best tradition of the Royal Geographical Society, I journeyed

to Antarctica. What I found was a place that would probably be unrecognisable to the likes of Robert Scott or Ernest Shackleton.

I saw a continent on the verge of a catastrophe that could affect the entire world. The glaciers on King George Island have shrunk by 10 per cent. Some in Admiralty Bay have retreated by 25 kilometres.

The tragedy of Antarctica is being repeated, a million times over, in every part of our world. We're facing extended droughts, unprecedented cyclones and other effects that are wreaking havoc across the planet. The bottom line is that our climate is changing fast, and the world has been too slow in response.

Since taking over as Secretary-General, I have made it my priority to beat the drum on this impending crisis. I am determined to get the UN and our member states to step up action to meet this immense challenge.

My efforts received an unexpected boost with the award of last year's Nobel Peace Prize to the UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. The panel's research established that climate change was not only occurring, but accelerating, and that man-made emissions were largely responsible. Also last year, the UN-sponsored climate talks in Bali produced an agreement by all countries to launch negotiations on a new international climate change agreement by the end of 2009 and a roadmap for how to get there.

These welcome developments have placed the UN squarely at the forefront of the climate change response. My colleagues and I are determined to capitalise on the momentum generated and push for decisive action supported by all our member states.

Indeed, as I tell world leaders, whatever the costs of tackling climate change – and they are not as much as you might think – the cost of inaction is far, far greater.

In that sense, acting now is not only the right thing to do: it is also the cheaper alternative.

Global health is another pressing challenge which we are poised to meet.

Migration and rapid urbanisation have changed the way we look at global health. Diseases and pandemics spread across borders much faster than ever before. If they are not controlled effectively, the impact will be devastating. The neglected diseases of the world's poor are one example. So-called 'neglected tropical diseases' that affect millions beyond tropical regions are another.

The silver lining to this dark cloud is that the world has the ability to treat and control many of these diseases. And we also



Top to bottom:

Former UNA-UK Chair Sir Richard Jolly in conversation with Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon

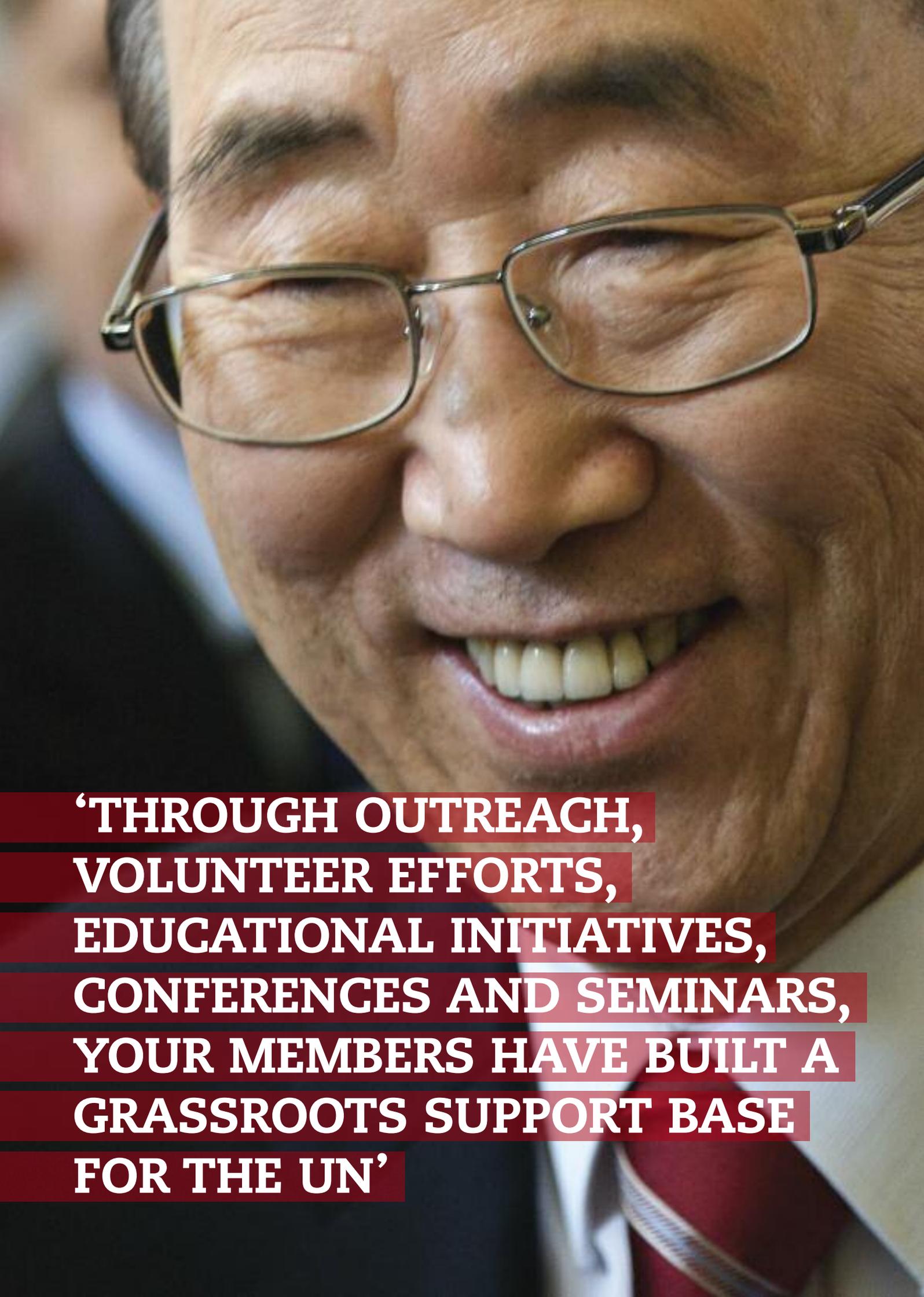
Amnesty International Secretary General Irene Khan and Oxfam Chief Executive Barbara Stocking

Professor Sir Adam Roberts presents the Secretary-General with a copy of his new book.

UNA-UK Vice-Chair Rod Fielding and former Vice-Chair Janet Blackman

**‘FOR FRIENDS OF THE  
UNITED NATIONS, THE NEED  
FOR COLLECTIVE ACTION  
REPRESENTS THE SILVER  
LINING TO SOME VERY  
DARK CLOUDS’**



A close-up, high-angle portrait of an older man with short, dark hair, wearing glasses and a suit. He is smiling broadly, showing his teeth. The background is blurred, suggesting an indoor setting with other people.

**‘THROUGH OUTREACH,  
VOLUNTEER EFFORTS,  
EDUCATIONAL INITIATIVES,  
CONFERENCES AND SEMINARS,  
YOUR MEMBERS HAVE BUILT A  
GRASSROOTS SUPPORT BASE  
FOR THE UN’**



Top to bottom

UNA-UK Chair Lord Hannay welcomes the Secretary-General at the podium

UN Under-Secretary-General B. Lynn Pascoe and Deputy Chef de Cabinet Kim Won-soo

Jumoké Fashola from the BBC

Lady Shelley Sawers and Ambassador Sir John Sawers

have the know-how to build health systems that serve all.

That is why the United Nations is pushing hard for sustainable action to cut maternal and child mortality, to combat HIV/AIDS, to defeat malaria, and to wipe out tuberculosis and other diseases. We are also working to build functioning and affordable health systems, starting with increased support to the people who staff them.

But these efforts are hindered by the fragmented nature of the global health landscape. That is also why the welcome rise in new actors and resources will not amount to much unless we ensure coherent and decisive action.

The United Nations is already working on this front, as a convenor and advocate for greater coordination and accountability among health actors. A few weeks ago, I called a meeting of United Nations and non-UN leaders in the health sphere to discuss top global health priorities and what we can do about them. I told them then, and I say to you now: too many lives hang in the balance for us to wait. This is the time to be decisive and bold.

Terrorism can affect anyone, anywhere, at any time – as you know too well, here in the United Kingdom, and we in the United Nations know in our missions around the world.

In 2006 the UN General Assembly adopted the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy. This was a milestone – the first time that all 192 member states came together to formulate a comprehensive, collective, and internationally approved plan to counter terrorism.

It was also the first time all member states agreed that certain conditions can be conducive to the spread of terrorism and that our counter-terrorism efforts must target these conditions. The adoption of this landmark strategy demonstrated, yet again, the UN's role in addressing key global challenges.

The organisation is now working closely with member states to apply the measures outlined in the strategy. Within the UN system itself, departments, programmes, funds and agencies have been taking action in a number of areas, in both their individual capacities as well as through joint efforts guided by the Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force. But we also look to our member states to rise to the occasion, and to follow through on this ambitious strategy.

In the same way, I look to member states to step up to the challenge of disarmament and non-proliferation.

Weapons of mass destruction, especially nuclear weapons, are inherently indiscriminate. They make no distinction between citizen and soldier, man and woman, the old and the young, plant and animal – indeed, no distinction among any living things. They wreak wholesale havoc, not just spatially but also temporally, lingering into the future to rob new generations of life, security and prosperity. And even when they are not used, these weapons remain a threat. There is always a risk that they can cause accidents, or fall into the wrong hands, with deadly consequences.

There is now near universal recognition of the risks inherent in the very existence of weapons of mass destruction. There is also widespread understanding of the dangers accompanying unconstrained competition in conventional weaponry. In fact, in deliberations at the United Nations, the vast majority of states continue to cite zero as the most desirable minimum number of nuclear weapons. They also accept that verified and irreversible disarmament remains the safest, most reliable way to protect against the use of weapons of mass destruction.

Building on these points of agreement, any realistic approach to security should involve the simultaneous pursuit of two essential goals: the elimination of all weapons of mass destruction – namely, nuclear, biological and chemical weapons – and the limitation of other types of weapons to legitimate defensive purposes.

I intend to work with member states in pursuit of these ideals. My own experiences in Korea taught me that there is simply no other way to safeguard our collective security, and ensure a peaceful world.

The four challenges I have just outlined today are truly global. They affect all and they require attention by all.

I have identified the issues, but I have not proposed solutions. These require more than a 20-minute monologue from a Secretary-General, or, for that matter, even the most profound thinking at the local or national level. They require collective thinking and global approaches. In short, they require the United Nations. Not just the organisation, but also the ideal – all people working together for the collective good.

That is my challenge to you today. As supporters of the United Nations, as decision-makers, as activists and as concerned citizens, you can make crucial contributions. The issues are already before us. But solutions will come through joint and unprecedented effort. Together, we can tackle the looming challenges and make our world healthier and safer for all people.

# Tackling sexual exploitation and abuse by UN peacekeepers

## Abuse in West Africa incites UN action

On 15 October 2003 Secretary-General Kofi Annan issued a bulletin to all United Nations personnel in which he announced standards of conduct prohibiting sexual exploitation and abuse. He stated that sexual exploitation and abuse violated international legal norms and told staff that such acts constituted serious misconduct. The standards listed in the bulletin drew from the recommendations of an interagency task force, set up rapidly in March 2002.

The impetus for the bulletin and the task force was a series of hard-hitting allegations, which grabbed headlines in early 2002, that displaced women and children in West Africa were being sexually abused and exploited by UN peacekeepers and UN and non-UN humanitarian workers. The UN's Office for Internal Oversight Services investigated the claims, and submitted its findings to the General Assembly later that year. The Assembly in turn called on the Secretary-General to initiate reforms to tackle the problem, and then report back regularly on any new cases and steps taken.

A raft of measures has since been implemented, underpinned by a strict UN-wide policy of zero tolerance for sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA). Yet allegations have continued – in the Democratic Republic of Congo (2003), Burundi (2004), Sudan (2005), Haiti (2006) and Liberia (2006) – illustrating that the UN Secretariat, UN agencies and UN member states need to continue and intensify their efforts.

This briefing outlines the development of the UN's anti-SEA strategy and takes stock of progress in implementing reforms. Because the vast majority of SEA cases are perpetrated by peacekeeping personnel, the briefing focuses on the UN's efforts to stamp out SEA in peace operations.

## Zeid report pinpoints key problems

In 2004 Secretary-General Kofi Annan appointed Prince Zeid of Jordan – a key provider of troops for UN peacekeeping missions – to serve as his SEA adviser. Prince Zeid's report, released in March 2005, catalogued the potential risks of failing to eliminate SEA.

SEA, Zeid argued, damages the impartiality of the mission in the eyes of the local population; engenders ill-discipline among troops, so degrading the mission's effectiveness; undercuts the legitimacy of the UN in advising the host government about human rights standards and judicial reform; opens up the possibility of blackmail and retaliation; increases the incidence of medical problems, including the risk of contracting HIV/AIDS; and perpetuates the trauma of the beneficiary population, for instance by exposing rape victims and 'peacekeeper babies' to stigmatisation.

Zeid identified four fundamental challenges which needed to be addressed if the UN was to form an effective response to SEA.

### 1. Uneven rules, standards and training for different categories of peacekeeping personnel

Zeid noted the complexity of UN peace operations, which may feature civilian, military and police components. Each is governed by a different set of rules and disciplinary procedures, with troop-contributing countries (TCCs) retaining responsibility for the conduct of their military personnel. Zeid recommended that the standards set out in the Secretary-General's bulletin be applied across all categories of peacekeeping personnel.

### 2. Patchy investigation procedures

Zeid noted that evidence gathered by UN mission investigators was sometimes considered incompatible with national legal systems, undermining prospects for prosecution following the repatriation of

alleged offenders. Zeid recommended the establishment of a permanent investigative mechanism, with access to modern forensic methods, professionals with expertise in investigating sex crimes and legal experts who could advise on the evidentiary requirements and burden of proof in TCCs.

### 3. Inadequate organisational, managerial and command accountability

Zeid pointed to a 'justified perception' that the UN's civilian managers and military commanders were not being held professionally responsible for combating SEA, and put forward a range of measures for tightening organisational, managerial and command accountability.

### 4. Weak individual criminal accountability and ambiguous jurisdiction

Zeid outlined two key challenges to holding offenders accountable for their crimes: first, the failure of many TCCs to pursue prosecution once repatriation had occurred; and, second, the difficulty in waiving UN staff immunity in unstable countries with shoddy judicial systems and poor compliance with minimum human rights standards. Zeid recommended that this jurisdictional gap be closed by amending the model memorandum of understanding between the UN and the TCC to strengthen the latter's legal responsibilities. He also proposed a new treaty to clarify jurisdiction in cases involving non-military offenders.

## UN follow-up to Zeid recommendations

The Zeid report was debated by the General Assembly in April 2005. Its recommendations have spawned a package of reforms, still ongoing, which aim to prevent SEA, strengthen accountability, and assist and support victims. Some highlights are summarised below.

### Preventing SEA: widening adherence to standards of conduct

In November 2005, the UN's Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) set up

a network of conduct and discipline units (CDU). The headquarters team, housed in DPKO in New York, exercises global oversight of discipline in UN peace operations; the field-based units advise heads of mission on preventing and addressing misconduct by all categories of peacekeeping personnel. All peacekeeping missions now feature CDUs.

Training on SEA prevention has been, since mid-2005, mandatory for all peacekeeping personnel upon arrival in their mission. A range of supplementary educational resources have also been rolled out, by both DPKO and missions. Other preventive steps taken include higher-quality recreation facilities for mission staff, the idea being to keep them busy when off duty.

#### Strengthening accountability: preventing impunity

In July 2007, the General Assembly approved a revised model memorandum of understanding for troop (and police) contributors to UN peace operations. The new memorandum assigns responsibility to TCCs for investigating abuses by members of their contingents and reaffirms their exclusive jurisdiction over offences committed.

Non-military personnel, too, may soon be subject to greater criminal accountability. A panel of legal experts appointed by the UN has backed the international convention proposed by Zeid. The treaty, currently in draft form, obligates states to exercise jurisdiction over crimes committed by their nationals while serving on UN missions, in the event that the host state is unable to prosecute the alleged offender.

#### Assisting and supporting victims: remedial action

In March 2008 the General Assembly adopted a UN-wide strategy for assisting and supporting victims of SEA by UN personnel. The strategy states that all complainants should receive medical and psychological care and access to legal services, as well as food, clothing and shelter as necessary. The strategy also mandates the UN to work with member states to facilitate the pursuit of paternity claims and child support.

#### Impacts beginning to show

The UN has been criticised, legitimately, for not confronting SEA as forcefully as it

should have done when the allegations in 2002 emerged. But in recent years the UN has matched its zero-tolerance policy with action, in some cases quite robust. Between the beginning of 2004 and the end of 2006, the UN investigated SEA allegations involving 319 peacekeeping personnel, resulting in the summary dismissal of 18 civilians, and the repatriation of 17 police and 144 troops. In July 2007, the UN confined a 730-strong battalion of Moroccan troops on mission in Côte d'Ivoire to its barracks after uncovering allegations of widespread SEA. And in November that same year, the UN repatriated 108 Sri Lankan peacekeepers serving in Haiti, after a preliminary investigation found that they had paid for prostitutes, some of whom may have been underage.

In the Secretary-General's most recent report to the General Assembly on SEA, Ban Ki-moon stated that the UN had made 'crucial progress in establishing a sustainable framework within which to address sexual exploitation and abuse'. He also noted a 5 per cent increase between 2005 and 2006 in the number of claims made against peacekeeping personnel – the target of the overwhelming bulk of allegations. One reason for the increase is that the number of peacekeeping personnel grew by 14 per cent in 2006; another important explanation is that reporting mechanisms improved during the period in question. Mr Ban pointed to a distinct downward trend in allegations over the course of 2006 as evidence that DPKO's anti-SEA efforts were taking hold: between January and December allegations declined from 97 to 12 per month.

Another success story may be playing out in Liberia, once one of the worst-affected countries: allegations fell from nine in 2006 to just two in 2007. Notably, both its peacekeeping force and peacebuilding process feature a high level of female participation – as advocated by Security Council resolution 1325 on women, peace and security.

#### No grounds for complacency

Despite these gains, allegations – some substantiated – continue. As Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon said recently, 'even one incident is one too many'. The UN must meet its system-wide commitment to zero tolerance and hold managers accountable for results in implementing SEA

strategies. It must continue to act with transparency and make data on allegations readily available. It must increase the numbers of women serving on its missions and appoint more of them to senior positions. It must inform local communities of action taken against offenders, and provide support to their victims.

A make-or-break challenge will be to ensure that SEA is not treated with impunity. Here the UN's scope for action is fundamentally restricted: of the nearly 110,000 peacekeeping personnel deployed around the world, over 80 per cent fall beyond its disciplinary jurisdiction, a legal reality typically disregarded in the media. If member states do not step up to punish troops guilty of such misconduct, trust in UN peacekeeping could erode.

*UNA-UK is grateful to Kate Grady for her expert advice and feedback.*

#### Addressing underreporting key to addressing SEA

In May, Save the Children UK released a report entitled 'No One to Turn To'. Based on research from three case studies – Côte d'Ivoire, Haiti and southern Sudan – the report identified chronic underreporting of abuse as a major challenge for eliminating the sexual abuse of children by aid workers and peacekeepers.

The study found that abuses went unreported often out of fear of reprisals and a belief that nothing would come of doing so. The report emphasised the need for effective local complaints mechanisms, and called for a new global SEA watchdog. It also urged that more resources be marshalled towards tackling the underlying drivers of abuse.

Some media coverage of the report suggested that it singled out the UN for particular censure. This is not the case: the report's remit includes UN as well as non-UN personnel, and the UN is furthermore praised for its transparency.

On the publication of the report Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon said, 'The abuse of children by those sent to help is a significant and painful issue and one that UN peacekeeping has and will continue to address candidly, comprehensively and robustly.'

# The history of a success: UNA-UK's role in securing a cluster munitions ban

## 1943

Early forms of cluster bombs are first used, by the Soviet Union against Germany and by Germany against Britain during World War II.

## 1964-1973

UNA-UK condemns the first large-scale use of the weapon, by the US in Vietnam, Cambodia and Lao People's Democratic Republic.

## 1970s and 1980s

The US restricts sales of cluster munitions to Israel in the 1970s, following large-scale civilian casualties in fighting against Syria and Lebanon.

In 1974-1976 states meeting to assess the laws of armed conflict conclude that cluster munitions are 'on the very border-line of humanitarian acceptability'. Sweden proposes a ban and is backed by 12 other states. Negotiations lead to the adoption in 1980 of the UN Convention on Conventional Weapons.

In 1982 the US terminates sales to Israel after attacks on Lebanon. The British use the weapon in the 1980s in the Falklands conflict, as does the Soviet Union in Afghanistan, and Morocco in Western Sahara.

## 1990s

Cluster munitions users proliferate. The US and its allies deploy the weapon in the Gulf War. Cluster munitions are used by Yugoslav and other forces during the Bosnian conflict, and also in Tajikistan, southern Sudan, Ethiopia and Eritrea, Sierra Leone and Chechnya.

### 1997

The landmine convention is signed by 122 states (158 as of 2008) but cluster munitions are not included.

### 1999

NATO's deployment of cluster munitions during the Kosovo conflict causes more civilian casualties than any other weapon. President Clinton suspends their use by US forces after a particularly devastating attack.

## 2001-03

The US deploys the weapon in Afghanistan in 2001-2002. US and UK forces use cluster bombs during the 2003 invasion of Iraq, where they kill and maim more civilians than any other weapon.

## 2006 July-August

The UN's humanitarian chief calls Israel's use of the weapon in southern Lebanon 'completely immoral', with 90 per cent of strikes taking place after the ceasefire had been agreed. The conflict draws attention to the weapon's horrific post-conflict impacts and catalyses states to seek an international ban.

### December

The Norwegian government announces that it will host a meeting in Oslo in early 2007 aimed at launching diplomatic negotiations towards a treaty banning cluster munitions.



## 2007

16 January

UNA-UK Chair Lord Hannay writes to Foreign Secretary Margaret Beckett urging the government to give its full support to the so-called 'Oslo process'. UNA-UK members follow this up with letters to MPs.

23 January

UNA-UK receives a reply from the Foreign Secretary. She says the government shares UNA-UK's concern about the weapon's humanitarian impacts and confirms the UK's attendance at the Oslo conference.

22 February

The inaugural conference of the Oslo process takes place. Attended by 49 states and many NGOs and UN bodies, the meeting concludes with 46 countries, including the UK, endorsing the Oslo Declaration – a commitment to conclude by 2008 a new legally binding instrument that prohibits 'the use, production, transfer and stockpiling of cluster munitions that cause unacceptable harm to civilians'.

24 February

The UK government's decision to sign the Oslo Declaration is labelled a 'U-turn' by the *Independent*.

26 February

UNA-UK joins the Cluster Munition Coalition (CMC) – a global network of around 300 NGOs campaigning for a comprehensive ban.

20 March

Defence Secretary Des Browne announces that the UK will immediately cease all use of so-called 'dumb' cluster munitions.

1 April

New World features a briefing note outlining UNA-UK's concern over the misleading distinction between different models of the weapon, and calls attention to the humanitarian risks of so-called 'smart' bombs.

13-15 April

UNA-UK Annual Conference agrees a policy resolution objecting to the government's retention of 'smart' cluster munitions.

23-25 May

28 new states join the Oslo process at the second meeting, hosted by Peru in Lima.

5 November

UNA-UK staff and members participate in the CMC's UK day of action against cluster munitions and add their names to a giant signature board.

5-7 December

Diplomatic momentum towards a ban picks up at the third Oslo process meeting, hosted by Austria in Vienna. On the eve of the conference Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon voices UN backing for the treaty, noting the 'high humanitarian, human rights and developmental stakes' involved. Tim Kellow attends the conference as a member of the CMC's delegation, and lobbies many developing country delegates to sign up to the treaty.

17 December

An early day motion authored by UNA-UK is tabled by Martin Caton MP and receives 75 signatures. EDM 602 expresses concern that the UK and other stockpiling countries 'are seeking to water down the treaty by introducing an exemption for cluster munitions that have self-destruct mechanisms'.

## 2008

1 January

New World features an article outlining challenges for negotiations on the ban and encourages members to write to their MPs to urge them to sign EDM 602.

18-22 February

New Zealand hosts the fourth Oslo process meeting in Wellington. Over 100 states sign the Wellington Declaration, committing them to participate in the final negotiations at a key conference in Dublin in May. Delegates also agree a framework text for the treaty.

28-30 March

UNA-UK Annual Conference agrees a policy resolution urging the UK to work in good faith towards a treaty 'with no distinctions or reservations between different categories of cluster munitions'. UNA-UK members sign a CMC petition calling on the UK to support such a ban.

2 April

Lord Hannay writes to Foreign Secretary David Miliband to relay the Annual Conference resolution. UNA-UK members write to their MPs, urging them to call on the government to ensure that the treaty is not watered down.

19 April

UNA-UK holds the UK's headline event to mark the CMC's global day of action to ban cluster munitions. Hosted by Central Region UNA in Birmingham, the meeting features presentations from Tim Kellow and Landmine Action's Richard Moyes. More signatures are collected for the CMC petition.

28 April

Lord Hannay and other leading UK CMC members hand over the petition to the Foreign Secretary. It boasts more than 30,000 signatures, many from UNA-UK members.

16 May

The Foreign Secretary responds to Lord Hannay's 2 April letter, reaffirming the UK's commitment to achieving an international ban at the Dublin conference.

19 May

As delegates gather in Dublin for the final Oslo Process meeting, *The Times* publishes a letter by nine former British commanders warning the government that 'to choose a course that seeks to exempt the UK's remaining stocks from a ban risks creating loopholes that others will inevitably exploit. Most importantly it will not achieve the stigmatisation of cluster munitions, which must be our objective if we are to prevent the proliferation of these weapons'. UNA-UK's Tim Kellow attends the conference as part of the CMC delegation.

30 May

107 states agree the new treaty. The ban is categorical, with no transition periods or exceptions allowed. Prime Minister Gordon Brown plays a key role with a last-minute intervention announcing the UK's support for a total ban.

Lord Hannay writes to the Foreign Secretary, copying in the Secretaries of State for Defence and International Development, to congratulate the UK for helping to secure the treaty. The letter also urges the government now to 'throw its full weight behind efforts to achieve the maximum support for the convention by other governments and the largest possible number of signatories to the convention'. A UNA-UK press statement is also issued.

26 June

The Foreign Secretary responds, praising UNA-UK's advocacy for the ban and stating the government's intention to encourage other states to support the new convention.

3 December

The convention opens for signature in Oslo. It will enter into force once it has been ratified by 30 countries.

## UNA-UK Interview

### His Excellency Luis Alfonso de Alba

The Human Rights Council forms a central part of the UN's machinery for promoting and protecting the rights and values set out in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which turns 60 later this year. The Council is a relatively new body, set up in 2006 to replace the UN Commission on Human Rights. In its last years the Commission came under heavy fire for the selectivity and politicisation of its decisions, a criticism which is now also being levelled at the Council.

Luis Alfonso de Alba is Mexico's ambassador to the UN and its representative on the Council, of which he was also the first president. In this interview with UNA-UK, Ambassador de Alba parries criticisms of the Council, updates us on institutional reforms in the Council and argues for greater US engagement with the body.

#### **In your view, does the Human Rights Council represent an improvement over its predecessor, the Commission on Human Rights?**

With the establishment of the Council, human rights were accorded a higher institutional level at the UN. This in itself makes me certain that the Council represents a significant improvement over the Commission. The Council also benefits from the following features:

First, its working culture is oriented towards addressing all human rights more effectively and on an equal footing, with an emphasis on dialogue, cooperation and stronger participation by different stakeholders, including NGOs and National Human Rights Institutions (NHRIs). Second, the Council has an enhanced capacity to address urgent human rights situations, both thematic and country-specific, through Special Sessions. Third, a new mechanism – the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) – acts to counter politicisation and selectivity, and to make all states more accountable vis-à-vis their human rights obligations.

While not free of politicisation, the Council now has better tools for the universal promotion and protection of human rights, as well as for the prevention of human rights violations. It is also better equipped to reduce the confrontation and selectivity that undermined the Commission. It is the responsibility of members and observers of the Council, as well as civil society, to deploy these tools to preserve and enhance the body's strengths.

#### **Will the introduction of the new Universal Periodic Review mechanism strengthen the Council's credibility? What challenges face its implementation?**

UPR does strengthen the credibility of the Council in as much as it provides for the review of the fulfillment of human rights obligations by all countries, without distinction, under the same rules and on the basis of universal standards. The reviews are based on information submitted by the country in question as well as by the UN system and civil society. I believe that the first 32 reviews have demonstrated that states and civil society are seriously committed to the exercise.

Some of the challenges which may need to be addressed are: preserving the cooperative spirit of the mechanism while at the same time maintaining results-oriented discussions; supporting developing countries undertaking the review; enhancing the participation of civil society and NHRIs; and promoting international cooperation.

Another important challenge will be the follow-up phase. The implementation of recommendations and voluntary commitments stemming from the review will be the most palpable contribution of the mechanism. States will need to take concrete steps at the national level to ensure progress. But civil society, NHRIs and the international community as a whole also have a key role to play in supporting these efforts and helping to enhance states' capacities.

#### **The Council has been criticised, including by former Secretary-General Kofi Annan, for focusing too much on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Do you believe that there is a problem with selectivity in the country situations addressed by the Council? If so, are there any obvious remedies?**

I am aware of such criticisms, which are neither new nor exclusive to the Council. It is necessary to clarify some issues in order to give a more accurate picture of the Council.

The Council has an agenda item on the human rights situation in Palestine and other occupied Arab territories, which is broader in scope than the comparable item on the Commission's agenda. It remains a standing item because the situation in the territories is unique. The approach taken by the Council allows for the discussion of human rights in the region, regardless of the nationalities of the victims or the perpetrators. In addition, under the item 'Human rights situations that require the Council's attention', any country situation may be considered.

The Council also has a Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Palestinian territories, as well as eight other country-specific Special Procedures: for four African countries, three Asian, and one Caribbean. All of them report regularly to the Council and participate in interactive dialogue with delegations.

The Special Sessions of the Council have attracted particular attention. Four have focused on the Middle East, including the conflict between Israel and

‘While not free of politicisation, the Council now has better tools for the universal promotion and protection of human rights, as well as for the prevention of human rights violations. It is also better equipped to reduce the confrontation and selectivity that undermined the Commission’

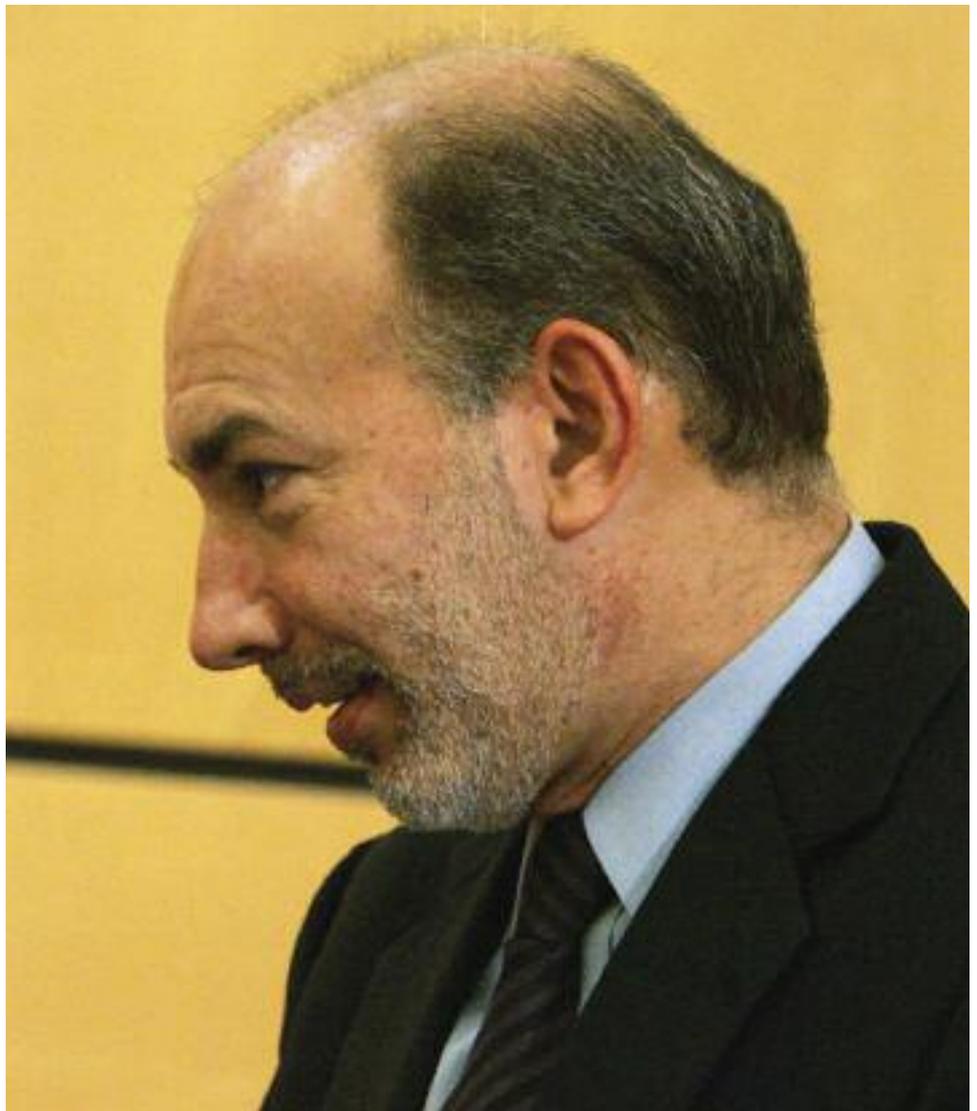


Photo © UNDPH

Lebanon, while three others have dealt with Darfur, Myanmar and the world food crisis. Given conditions on the ground and the responsibilities of the Council, all of these situations clearly merited the Council’s attention.

The persistent challenge is to ensure the implementation of the Council’s decisions. For that purpose, enhanced dialogue, a consensual approach and more balanced resolutions are necessary.

**The United States voted against the establishment of the Council and has not yet stood for election. How important is it for the Council to secure American engagement, and what steps have you taken to achieve this?**

I believe it is very important for the international community that the US – as a key player and a major stakeholder in most of the issues with which the Council is concerned – participates fully in the Council’s work. Surely, both the Council and the US have much to gain from more substantive American engagement in advancing the international human rights agenda.

As former President of the Council and as Mexico’s representative on the Council, I have worked closely with the US delegation on many Council-related issues – for example during the consultations held on the Council’s institution-building process, in which the US participated actively and constructively.

I trust that the US will eventually come on board and start focusing more on the substantive issues, rather than on membership or other institutional matters, and do so from a less ideological standpoint. It is also important to recognise the benefits of a new culture in which all countries acknowledge their own challenges on human rights issues.

**What are the prospects for strengthening the Council’s system of independent experts (‘Special Procedures’)?**

Let me start by highlighting the importance of the Council’s consensual decision to renew almost all of the former Commission’s Special Procedures mandates: this was crucial to avoid a ‘protection gap’. In addition to renewing man-

dates, the Council retains the capacity to create new ones. In fact, two new independent experts have been established – on access to safe drinking water and sanitation and on contemporary forms of slavery.

The process of mandate renewal aims to preserve the coherence of the system. It also allows for the improvement of mandates, taking into account their historical evolution, the development of the human rights issues they are concerned with, the international human rights framework, and the need to address all human rights issues equitably.

The new selection and appointment process for the Special Procedures allows for more transparency and objectivity. The elaboration and publication of a list of vacancies and candidates, and the thorough examination of candidates undertaken by a consultative group and the Council President in consultation with delegations and civil society, undoubtedly elevates the legitimacy of the process and the quality of the Special Procedures system.

## UNA-UK climate change conference series gets underway in Birmingham



Paul Hilder of Avaaz.org, and Ziana Kotadia, DEFRA's West Midlands Climate Change Champion, during the interactive question-and-answer time



Alex Evans, Fellow at NYU's Center on International Cooperation



Gillian Briggs, of Central Region UNA, puts a question to the panel

Birmingham was the ideal place to kick off 'The Climate Challenge: A call to action' – the UK-wide climate change conference series being organised by UNA-UK and sponsored by the Foreign & Commonwealth Office.

Attended by 120 people, the Birmingham conference drew a diverse audience: UNA-UK members from the region were joined by local government officials, environmental NGOs and faith groups. Opened by UNA-UK Chair Lord Hannay, the event featured incisive presentations by climate experts Alex Evans and Paul Hilder. A highlight for many was the impassioned speech by 14-year-old Ziana Kotadia, DEFRA's Youth Climate Champion for the West Midlands.

The afternoon saw attendees participating in a wide range of workshops. One particularly popular session, led by an Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change scientist, equipped participants with the essential facts about climate science; another explored the potential of personal carbon trading; still another showcased schemes to cut CO<sub>2</sub> emissions in Birmingham.

The importance of environmental education was also covered, as was the utility of faith in combating climate change. There was even a session with a ukulele!

### UPCOMING CONFERENCES

#### NORTHERN IRELAND

Thursday, 6 November 2008  
Grosvenor House, Belfast

#### SCOTLAND

Saturday, 13 December 2008  
Hampden Park, Glasgow

#### WALES

Friday, 13 March 2009  
Brangwyn Hall, Swansea

To request a place visit

[www.una.org.uk/climate](http://www.una.org.uk/climate),  
call 020 7766 3448 or write to  
Climate Change, UNA-UK,  
3 Whitehall Court, London  
SW1A 2EL

### TAKE ACTION!

Visit the UNA-UK climate change website for ideas on actions you can take to help fight climate change:  
[www.una.org.uk/climate](http://www.una.org.uk/climate)

No internet? Call 020 7766 3459 or write to Climate Change, UNA-UK, 3 Whitehall Court, London SW1A 2EL.

UNA-UK's conference was run as part of Birmingham's Climate Change Festival – billed as the world's first! During the festival 1,500 people signed pledges to reduce their carbon footprints by 100kg over the next 12 months.

*Report by Waverley Parsons  
Birmingham conference organiser*

### Resources

Audio recordings and presentation transcripts from the Birmingham conference can be downloaded at [www.una.org.uk/climate/birmingham](http://www.una.org.uk/climate/birmingham)

Also posted here is a series of briefing papers on climate change. Written by climate change expert Alex Evans, the briefings cover these topics:

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

To order a hard copy set of these briefings, call 020 7766 3448 or e-mail [climate@una.org.uk](mailto:climate@una.org.uk)

# Parliament



## UNA-UK and BASIC join forces to promote multilateral disarmament

UNA-UK and BASIC have launched an early day motion (EDM) to promote the Nuclear Security Project, a multilateral disarmament initiative fronted by US foreign policy heavyweights Henry Kissinger, Sam Nunn, William Perry and George Shultz. The objectives of the project are to encourage global action to minimise nuclear dangers, reduce reliance on nuclear weapons and ultimately end them as a threat to the world.

UNA-UK and BASIC wrote to all MPs before the summer recess, inviting them to sign the EDM. Already 75 MPs from across the political spectrum have signed up. If your MP is not one of them, you are urged to ask her or him to do so.

The autumn issue of *New World* will feature more information about EDM 2053. In the meantime, any questions about this campaign should be directed to Tim Kellow on [kellow@una.org.uk](mailto:kellow@una.org.uk) or 020 7766 3446.

## Lords committee calls for UN leadership in global disease control

The House of Lords Ad Hoc Committee on Intergovernmental Organisations has released the report of its six-month inquiry into the effectiveness of intergovernmental efforts to control the global spread of infectious diseases. In keeping with evidence submitted by UNA-UK, the report calls for better organisation and resources for the World Health Organization, to equip it to exercise leadership within the 'crowded and poorly coordinated' landscape of international disease control.

To download a copy of *Diseases Know No Frontiers*, visit [www.parliament.uk](http://www.parliament.uk)

## UN parliamentary group expands

UNA-UK has invited all members of the House of Commons Foreign Affairs, Defence and International Development Select Committees, the House of Lords Intergovernmental Organisations Committee and the Joint Committee on Human Rights to join the All-Party Parliamentary Group on

the UN. The group now numbers 54 MPs and peers.

To find out if your MP is a member, visit [www.una.org.uk/parliament](http://www.una.org.uk/parliament) or contact Mark Rusling on 020 7766 3459.

## Lord Hannay joins Tony Lloyd MP at the helm of non-proliferation group

UNA-UK Chair Lord Hannay is now, alongside Labour MP Tony Lloyd, Joint Convenor of the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Global Security and Non-Proliferation. The aim of the group is to encourage debate on countering the proliferation of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons.

For more information about this all-party group and others visit [www.parliament.uk](http://www.parliament.uk)

## UNA-UK and Saferworld collaborate on Peacebuilding Commission event

In June UNA-UK teamed up with Saferworld to hold an event in Parliament on 'The UN Peacebuilding Commission:

progress so far and prospects for the future'. The expert panel featured Carolyn McAskie, UN Assistant Secretary-General for Peacebuilding Support; Paul Collier, Professor of Economics at Oxford University; and Lord Hannay, Chair of UNA-UK.

To read a summary of this event visit [www.saferworld.org.uk](http://www.saferworld.org.uk)

## David Hannay keeps up the pressure in the House of Lords

Lord Hannay continues to raise UN issues in the House of Lords. In recent months he has asked the government about IAEA inspections of a potential nuclear site in Syria; highlighted the need to reinvigorate efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goals; questioned the government about the applicability of the responsibility to protect in Burma; and asked the government about its position on John McCain's proposal for a so-called 'league of democracies'.

To read the official record of Lord Hannay's interventions visit [www.una.org.uk/parliament](http://www.una.org.uk/parliament)

## UNA-UK's Parliament website



The Parliament section of UNA-UK's website now features a regular round-up of UN issues being considered by MPs and peers – through debates, oral and written questions, and select committee hearings and publications. [www.una.org.uk/parliament/News](http://www.una.org.uk/parliament/News)



Ethiopia is facing a critical food shortage, its people hit by drought and soaring food prices. 4.5 million of them need emergency food assistance. 75,000 children are already severely malnourished. UN humanitarian agencies are working with the Ethiopian government to provide emergency relief.

# Do something.

Visit [www.una.org.uk/dosomething](http://www.una.org.uk/dosomething) to find out how you can support the work of UN agencies

# Resources



## The UN Online

- Against All Odds is an online interactive game that raises awareness about refugees by allowing players to assume the character of a refugee fleeing persecution. From flight to new life, you are forced to make the same life-and-death decisions that refugees face in their struggle to find their way to safety.  
[www.playagainstallodds.com](http://www.playagainstallodds.com)
- To commemorate the 60th anniversary of the first peacekeeping operation, the UN has launched a multimedia website to honour the history and ongoing importance of one of the most vital aspects of the world body's activities.  
[www.un.org/events/peacekeeping60](http://www.un.org/events/peacekeeping60)
- Watch webcasts, stream audio, and peruse pictures from the High-level Conference on World Food Security hosted by the UN Food and Agriculture Organisation in June.  
[www.fao.org/foodclimate](http://www.fao.org/foodclimate)
- In early June, the UN hosted a high-level meeting to review progress towards reaching the goal of universal access to HIV prevention, treatment, care and support by the year 2010. Footage from all three days of this important conference is now available online.  
[www.un.org/ga/aidsmeeting2008](http://www.un.org/ga/aidsmeeting2008)

## Now available from UNA-UK

### CLIMATE CHANGE BRIEFING SERIES

by Alex Evans

### DOCUMENTING THE UN'S SUCCESSES

by Veronica Lie with research by Tim Kellow, Cynthia Park, John Phillips, Matt Ripley, Mark Rusling and Natalie Samarasinghe

### THE UN SYSTEM AND EXTRAORDINARY RENDITION

by Natalie Samarasinghe

### GLOBAL REACTION TO THE PROPOSED 'LEAGUE OF DEMOCRACIES'

by Mipe Okunseinde

The above resources are all available on the UNA-UK website. Hard copies can be requested by contacting Rich Nelmes on 020 7766 3456 or [nelmes@una.org.uk](mailto:nelmes@una.org.uk)

## Books

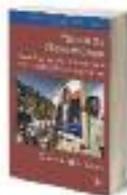


### The Human Dimension of International Law

Antonio Cassese  
Oxford University Press  
June 2008

This collection brings together the most important papers of Antonio Cassese, the first president of the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia and one of the leading figures in international criminal justice. Spanning a period of over 25 years, the papers track the development of Cassese's thinking on key issues of modern international law and provide one-of-a-kind insight into how this area of the legal field has evolved over the last quarter of a century.

[www.oup.com](http://www.oup.com)



### Peace as Governance: Power-Sharing, Armed Groups and Contemporary Peace Negotiations

Chandra Lekha Sriram  
Palgrave Macmillan  
April 2008

This book asks whether including armed groups in structures of power is a viable way of ending conflict and building peace. Using case studies from Sri Lanka, Sudan, and Colombia, the book explores the limitations and dangers of this conflict resolution strategy.

[www.palgrave.com](http://www.palgrave.com)



### Fixing Failed States: A Framework for Rebuilding a Fractured World

Ashraf Ghani and Clare Lockhart  
Oxford University Press  
May 2008

One billion people are housed in the world's 40-60 failed states, where governments have all but collapsed, lawlessness reigns and basic services are not provided. Despite spending huge amounts of

money, the international community has failed in its attempts to stabilise these countries. Drawing upon their experiences in failed states ranging from Afghanistan to Nepal, the authors argue that the international community needs to develop new strategies which reflect the realities of the state system in a fully globalised world.

[www.oup.com](http://www.oup.com)



### The United Nations Security Council and War: The Evolution of Thought and Practice Since 1945

Vaughan Lowe, Adam Roberts, Jennifer Welsh and Dominik Zaum  
Oxford University Press  
June 2008

The first major assessment of the Security Council's role in confronting civil and international war since 1945, the book examines how much, if at all, the Council has supplanted traditional power politics and changed the use of force. The authors chart the evolution of the Council's responsibilities and illustrate how it has helped reduce the incidence of international war – by providing opportunities for consultation and military collaboration, and for developing legal and normative frameworks.

[www.oup.com](http://www.oup.com)



### Preventive Diplomacy at the UN

Bertrand G. Ramcharan  
Indiana University Press  
August 2008

In this book, Bertrand Ramcharan, a human rights scholar and former UN civil servant, maps out the evolution of preventive diplomacy, a concept first articulated by UN Secretary-General Dag Hammarskjöld in the 1950s. Ramcharan traces key successes and failures in the practice of preventive diplomacy and considers its application in an era marked by genocide and terrorism.

[www.iupress.indiana.edu](http://www.iupress.indiana.edu)

# Letters

send your letters to:

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



## Better off united, not divided

Shirley Williams's essay ('Resurrecting Reykjavik', spring 2008) about the efforts of the so-called 'Hoover Group' to revive multilateral nuclear disarmament is to be welcomed. People of my generation remember the tensions of the Cold War era, most notably the Cuban Missile Crisis of 1962, which brought the world to the brink of a nuclear war. During that period the UN served as a forum for dialogue and so helped stave off catastrophe.

Today, preventing nuclear disaster remains a world priority, but there are other disasters which require equally urgent attention – climate change, food shortages, and population pressures among them, as well as current global financial and economic instability.

Overcoming these complex and inter-related challenges will require strong leadership at the UN. Leadership is about being able to inspire people to come together to face common problems. I believe that Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon has the necessary qualities, and governments should give him the support he needs to do his job.

The UN itself will also need to become more truly united if it is to help deliver a more secure, prosperous and just world. Allowing Cold War-like divisions to re-emerge and entrench themselves will mean failure, and a future too grim to contemplate.

David J. Thomas  
Porthcawl Mid Glamorgan

## We can't afford to fail in 2010

Shirley Williams's article was realistic and informative, and backed up her argument for the 'imperative for action' on multilateral disarmament. As signs of progress Williams points to the Hoover Group and the Nuclear Threat Initiative, both of which originate in the US and aim to alert American and world opinion to the dangers of continued reliance on nuclear weapons, including their proliferation.

Our own government has itself been making noises which will be encouraging

to UNA-UK members and others committed to the goal of nuclear disarmament. In a letter I received in May from FCO Minister Kim Howells, who has responsibility for international security, he stated the government's commitment to the 'three pillars of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) – zero tolerance of proliferation; safe, secure and peaceful use of nuclear technology; and a re-invigorated commitment to a world free from nuclear weapons'. He also wrote, 'We are already looking towards and planning for the 2010 Review Conference on the NPT.'

This reference to the 2010 Review Conference reminds us of the total failure of its predecessor in 2005. It failed to endorse the 13 steps to nuclear disarmament agreed by consensus at the 2000 conference and proposed no alternatives. The many campaigns against nuclear weapons all counted for nothing.

There is a cautionary tale here. Despite all these efforts, men in power ignored their publics. If we want to redeem the failure of 2005 we need to build a new public opinion which governments will have to take account of.

At UNA-UK Annual Conference 2008, nuclear disarmament was named a campaigning priority for the Association. UNA-UK members should therefore take up the challenge, and direct their energy and expertise towards making a real impact in the run-up to 2010.

Betty Scharf  
Golders Green

## Regime change without tears

The military regime in Burma keeps its people in a state of cowed silence, uses rape and torture as instruments of coercion, persecutes its minorities, and suppresses peaceful demonstrators with violence. It has ignored a democratic vote and recently behaved with outrageous carelessness in the face of a natural disaster, by continuing with a rigged referendum and stalling efforts to move aid in to help the victims of cyclone Nargis. In short, the Burmese authorities are not exercising their responsibility to protect their population.

Some have gone so far as to argue that the obstructionism of the Burmese regime in the aftermath of the cyclone justified coercive intervention under the 'responsibility to protect' (R2P), endorsed by the 2005 UN World Summit. Yet the Burmese case did not fall easily into any of the four categories of human rights crises R2P was set up to address: genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity.

**'The UN needs to measure and publish the human rights record of all regimes, so that we can identify those whose actions are drifting towards the unacceptable'**

The Iraq invasion has demonstrated in any case that military intervention is not the way to bring down odious regimes. In the UN the international community has other tools at its disposal, short of military force. 'Smart' sanctions are one such tool, though they can be controversial. The problem is that each case of abuse is addressed on an ad hoc basis, and action in the UN takes place at the end of a long and uncertain political process.

We need to move to a framework of international rules of governance. The UN needs to measure and publish the human rights record of all regimes, so that we can identify those whose actions are drifting towards the unacceptable. In the case of severely abusive regimes like Burma and Zimbabwe, specified forms of misconduct should be matched with a tariff of penalties which are applied in a measured, stepwise and consistent basis, in order to avoid the protection that they often obtain from allies in the UN Security Council.

Dr Richard Lawson  
Member of the International Committee of the Green Party in England and Wales,  
writing in a personal capacity

## UDHR60 initiatives continue apace



**Sam Daws**  
UNA-UK Executive  
Director

A quick perusal of these pages shows that UNA-UK members are working intensely to ensure that the 60th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights is given the attention it merits, with UNA London & South-East Region leading the way. If you have not done so already, I urge you to enter UNA-UK's UDHR60 competition and promote it in your communities (see back page).

UNA-UK has been working hard to produce campaign and education materials for our members and supporters. If you are a member, this issue of New World should contain a range of resources to help your campaigning efforts (see adjacent box).

In other news, UNA-UK Annual Conference is returning to Scotland after a long hiatus (see page 30). I am delighted with the Procedure Committee's choice!

If you are a UNA-UK member this copy of New World should include the following UNA-UK publications:

- ✓ Documenting the UN's Successes
- ✓ Climate change: an introduction
- ✓ International climate change architecture
- ✓ UK climate change policy
- ✓ How climate links to other issues
- ✓ What individuals can do to help beat climate change

Missing anything? Contact Rich Nelmes on 020 7766 3456 or [membership@una.org.uk](mailto:membership@una.org.uk)

## UNA Westminster Branch

David Wardrop recounts how the branch's UDHR60 play made history

To mark the 60th anniversary of the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, UNA Westminster branch held a concert at St John's, Smith Square featuring Czech-born pianist Libor Novacek and acapella ensemble Voces8.

The concert was followed by the 20-minute play 'How the Universal Declaration Was Won', which concludes with a re-enactment of the historic UN General Assembly vote that adopted the declaration on 10 December 1948.

We had invited diplomats from the embassies of those states that had participated in the vote to play out the roles of their predecessors. This they did with evident enjoyment. The El Salvador ambassador's daughter, born on Human Rights Day, waved a voting card on behalf of her country; and a Thai diplomat blinked when he saw that his card read 'Siam'. The Lebanese delegate had actually known Charles Malik – one of the declaration's founding fathers and a character in the play. And representatives of Poland and the former Czechoslovakia changed history, by brandishing their voting cards theatrically despite their countries' refusal to vote for the declaration in 1948.



Actors playing UDHR drafters René Cassin, John Peters Humphrey and Eleanor Roosevelt

UNA Westminster invites fellow branches to stage their own performances of 'How the Universal Declaration Was Won', which features a six-person cast of characters (one female and five male). The script, synopsis, director's guide and audio track are available for £12. You can order by e-mail or post: write to David Wardrop on [info@humanrights2008.org.uk](mailto:info@humanrights2008.org.uk) or 61 Sedlescombe Road, London SW6 1RE.

Photo © Harold Stern

**UNA-UK**  
The United Nations Association of the UK



Photos © UNA Westminster/Benedict Parsons



Scenes from UNA Westminster branch's fifth annual conference to mark the International Day of UN Peacekeepers. The keynote speech was delivered by General Patrick Cammaert, the former force commander of the UN peacekeeping mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

As per tradition, a wreath-laying ceremony was held at the Cenotaph to pay solemn tribute to peacekeepers killed while serving on UN missions. UNA-UK staff member Tim Kellow once again served as the flag-bearer and led the procession down Whitehall.

### NEW UDHR60 WEBSITE

UNA London & South-East Region has launched a new website to host resources about the declaration as well as information about the region's programme of UDHR60 activities.



[humanrights2008.org.uk](http://humanrights2008.org.uk)

# Listings



## UNA events, campaigns & initiatives

### 6-7 September

#### UNA SOUTHERN COUNTIES REGION

The region is holding its annual conference over this weekend. With the theme of 'Human Rights: 60 years on from the Universal Declaration', the event programme features the following speakers: Natalie Samarasinghe, UNA-UK's human rights specialist; Gill Swain, of the World Council of Churches; Deirdre McConnell, of the Tamil Centre for Human Rights; and Dr Harold Hillman, a founder member of Amnesty International. The conference is being held at Chichester University (Bishop Otter Campus) and opens at 11am on Saturday, 6 September. The conference fee is £125, which covers the cost of all sessions, all meals, and bed and breakfast for the night of 6 September.

Contact: Nagalingamudaly Sidamparappillai (aka 'Sid') on 01189 429 467 or [nsidamparam@ntworld.com](mailto:nsidamparam@ntworld.com)

### 19 September

#### UNA WALES

UNA Wales will have a stall at Cardiff University's freshers' fair. Students interested in the work of UNA Wales are urged to drop by.

Contact: Ona Flindall on 02920 228 549 or [onaflindall@wcia.org.uk](mailto:onaflindall@wcia.org.uk)

### 23 October

#### UNA-UK

The annual parliamentary lobby – Lobby for the UN – will be launched at the Foreign Press Association (11 Carlton House Terrace, London SW1Y 5AJ). The event, to run from 4pm to 5.30pm, will feature speakers and free information resources. See page 2 of this issue of New World. You can register at [www.una.org.uk](http://www.una.org.uk) or by calling UNA-UK Campaigns & Education Officer Mark Rusling.

Contact: Mark Rusling on 020 7766 3459 or [rusling@una.org.uk](mailto:rusling@una.org.uk)

### 25 October

#### UNA BIRMINGHAM

At 7.30pm the branch is putting on a concert for UNICEF and UNHCR at St Columba's United Reformed Church (Chantry Road, Moseley, Birmingham B13 8DD). Performers will include Moseley Voices and Magenta – both a cappella choirs – as well as mezzo soprano Stella Sims and pianist Mick Perrier.

Contact: Gillian Briggs on 01214 496 032

### 6 November

#### UNA-UK AND UNA NORTHERN IRELAND

The second event in the UNA-UK conference series on climate change is being held at Grosvenor House in Belfast. To register or find out more visit the UNA-UK website. Alternatively call or write to John Phillips at UNA-UK.

Contact: John Phillips on 020 7766 3448 or [climate@una.org.uk](mailto:climate@una.org.uk)

### 24-30 November

#### UNA WESTMINSTER

The branch's third annual We the Peoples film festival will be held at selected London venues during the final week of November. The theme of this year's series will be the three pillars of freedom which form the basis of former UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan's landmark report *Larger Freedom: freedom from want; freedom from fear; and freedom to live in dignity*. The 2008 festival will also see the launch of 'Young Film-Makers for Development', a new initiative to showcase the work of directors from around the world under the age of nineteen.

To find out more about the film festival and Young Film-Makers for Development, visit [www.wethepeoples.org.uk](http://www.wethepeoples.org.uk)

Contact: David Wardrop on 020 7385 6738 or [info@unawestminster.org.uk](mailto:info@unawestminster.org.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](mailto: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.

### 13 December

#### UNA-UK AND UNA SCOTLAND

The third conference of the UNA-UK climate change series will be held at Hampden Park in Glasgow. To register or find out more visit the UNA-UK website. Alternatively call or write to John Phillips at UNA-UK.

Contact: John Phillips on 020 7766 3448 or [climate@una.org.uk](mailto:climate@una.org.uk)

## We the Peoples film festival 2007 compilation DVD now available

This DVD features 11 films from last year's festival, which focused on the challenges facing the Millennium Development Goals. Why not present one of these DVDs to your local school, together with the informative teacher's guide, or screen the DVD at a meeting of your local UNA-UK group? The DVD costs just £5 and the teacher's notes cost £2 (P&P included).

Please send cheques, payable to 'UNA Westminster branch', to UNA-W, 61 Sedlescombe Road, London SW6 1RE.

For more information, contact David Wardrop on 020 7385 6738 or [info@unawestminster.org.uk](mailto:info@unawestminster.org.uk)

UNA-UK member Bill Say has written an article about his experiences on a recent visit to North and South Korea and about the UN's role in the region. To obtain a copy contact the editor, Veronica Lie, on 020 7766 3451 or [lie@una.org.uk](mailto:lie@una.org.uk)

## Deaths

### Nicholas Gillett: 1914 to 2008

Nicholas Gillett, a Quaker who spent his life working for peace, died on 24 June. Among many other forms of service, he worked as a social worker in 1930s work camps for refugees who had fled Hitler's Germany, in education for UNESCO in Iran, the Philippines and Thailand, and as a peace worker in Belfast. In recent years he helped his wife, Mehr Fardoonji, run her organic farm in Cheshire.

UNA-UK owes a huge debt of gratitude to Nicholas. His family helped lay the foundations for both the League of Nations Union and UNA-UK (as well as Oxfam), and Nicholas himself passionately supported UNA-UK throughout his life, including by serving on our Executive Board and as a trustee of the UNA Trust. The great-grandson of the Quaker social reformer and anti-Crimean War activist John Bright MP, Nicholas Gillett established a UNA Trust endowment in Bright's name to fund UNA-UK's peace and security staff position. Nicholas's contribution to UNA-UK is continued by his son Bevis, who currently serves as a trustee on the UNA Trust.

In the foreword to Nicholas Gillett's memoirs, written in 2005 and entitled *Abolishing War: One Man's Attempt*, Sir Brian Urquhart (former UN Under-Secretary-General) writes, 'Gillett believes that we shall only transform the world through changing how people think and by thus building a culture of peace.' Nicholas Gillett devoted his life to this cause.

A memorial service will be held on Saturday, 6 September at Redlands Friends Meeting House, Hampton Road, Bristol BS6.

UNA-UK is also saddened by the deaths of John Chitty – tireless mainstay of the Purley with Sutton branch – and David Stafford, much-valued member of South-East Berkshire UNA. Olwen Fordham, South-East Berkshire's secretary, has written an obituary for David Stafford – to obtain a copy contact Rich Nelmes on 020 7766 3456 or membership@una.org.uk

## ACTION FOR UN RENEWAL

UNA-UK Chair Lord Hannay will deliver the annual Erskine Childers lecture hosted by Action for UN Renewal. The speech – 'Who rules the world? Global challenges and the role of the UN in peacekeeping, human rights and international law' – will take place at 7pm at Friends House (173 Euston Road, London NW1 2BJ). This event is free and open to all.

For more information and to register, please contact Vijay Mehta on 020 7377 2111 or vijay@vmpeace.org

### UNA-UK delegation to attend UN conference on 'Reaffirming Human Rights'

Over 2,000 NGO representatives – including a five-strong delegation from UNA-UK – will descend on Paris on 3 September for the 61st UN Department of Public Information/NGO Annual Conference. This year's theme is 'Reaffirming Human Rights: the Universal Declaration at 60'. The conference will take place at the UNESCO headquarters in Paris, the city in which the declaration was signed in 1948. The aim is to discuss effective ways that civil society can promote human rights at the international, national and local levels.

UNA-UK will be represented by Natalie Samarasinghe (UNA-UK staff) and Suzanne Long (UNA-UK member and UNA-UK Policy Committee human rights expert). They will be joined by YPN representative Kate Grady and UNYSA members Rasha Albazzaz and Mohamed Tarraf, all of whom were selected from a large pool of applicants with human rights expertise.

## IN OTHER BRANCH NEWS . . .

- **West of Scotland Model UN General Assembly:** Over 100 delegates took part in the debates, which covered the global food crisis; GM crops; landmines; and the rights of children.
- **Leamington Peace Festival:** Warwick & District UNA ran a stall at this event, spreading the word about the UN's 63 years of achievements.
- **Oxfordshire Model UN:** Former UNA-UK Director Malcolm Harper chaired the event, which was described by participating schools as 'an excellent opportunity for sixth formers to experience international relations at first hand'.
- **Nuclear weapons lecture:** UNA Church Stretton hosted a presentation about the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). Tristan Price, a PhD candidate at Aberystwyth University, spoke with enthusiasm about the need to strengthen the NPT, arguing that its problems were 'vast but not insurmountable'.
- **Tribute to local stalwarts:** Two members of the branch in Aberdeen have been honoured for giving between them nearly 90 years of service to UNA-UK. Laurence and Sheila Reid – who served respectively as treasurer and secretary of the branch for nearly 30 years – were presented with a certificate of UNA-UK life membership, signed by the Association's chair, Lord Hannay of Chiswick. The presentation was made by the Lord Provost of Aberdeen, comedian Buff Hardie and former local MP Malcolm Savidge – also a Vice-President of UNA-UK and President of UNA Scotland.



Photo © Aberdeen City Council/Norman Adams



## UNA-UK Annual Conference 2009 Edinburgh University 5–7 June 2009

### Information note from the Chair of Annual Conference:

I am delighted to announce that UNA-UK Annual Conference 2009 will be held at Edinburgh University. Nearly three decades have passed since this important yearly meeting was last staged in Scotland, and I hope that holding Conference here will help with the ongoing rejuvenation of UNA Scotland.

Please note that the Procedure Committee has decided, with the support of the UNA-UK Board of Directors, to hold Conference in early summer rather than in the spring, the principal reason being Edinburgh University's academic timetable.

The Procedure Committee identified three advantages to holding Annual Conference in June:

1. The most prominent criticism of Conference in the past has been the distance between the accommodation and the conference facilities. I visited Edinburgh in June, with UNA-UK Membership Officer Rich Nelmes, to review our options. The only venue that meets our budget and which features accommodation very close to the meeting rooms is available in June and not in March or April.
2. The weather – we hope! – will be more pleasant.
3. The later date will allow members more time to formulate motions. (See box on this page for the revised timetable.)

Andrew Boakes

### Timetable

#### 6 April

- Deadline for submission of policy issues and domestic motions

#### 21 April

- Preliminary agenda to be sent out

#### 5 May

- Deadline for submission of comments/amendments

#### 15 May

- Deadline for notification of the formal AGM, which must be held no later than 27 June 2009

#### 26 May

- Deadline for final agenda to be sent out, though this will likely be sent out considerably earlier

#### 5-7 June

- Annual Conference 2009 at Edinburgh University

## From the frontline



**Tim Kellow**  
YPN Coordinator

**20 June was World Refugee Day.** For the third year running YPN members joined UNHCR, the UN's refugee agency, to mark this important occasion. This year, UNHCR staged a thought-provoking exhibition in Trafalgar Square, recreating a refugee camp on the Chad-Sudan border. For more about this event, read on.

This issue's YPN interview is with Phil Cox, who has done his bit to get people thinking about conditions in Sudan. An award-winning film-maker (and a YPN member!), Phil was the first cameraman to film the conflict in Darfur.

Gaza, where another conflict is taking its toll on civilians, was the focus of our latest film screening. The event, organised by the YPN Working for Peace group, was hosted by Channel 4 at its London studios. See below for more information about the film.

After a well-earned break the network will swing into action again in the autumn. A key focus will be on how UK business can support the UN's fight against poverty and its drive to meet the Millennium Development Goals by 2015. These pages contain further details about these plans.

If you have any comments or suggestions, e-mail me on [kellow@una.org.uk](mailto:kellow@una.org.uk)

## Bringing Darfur to Londoners



© UNHCR/A.J.Davies

World Refugee Day is celebrated each year on 20 June to focus global attention on the challenges faced by the world's refugees. The numbers of those driven from their own country and into the care of UNHCR grew for the second year running, from just under 10 million in 2006 to almost 11.5 million in 2007.

This year, UNHCR marked World Refugee Day in the UK with a unique exhibition to raise awareness of the 250,000 Darfuri refugees in Chad. 'Experience Darfur' – a simulation of a refugee camp –

compellingly illustrated some of the challenges faced by UNHCR in delivering aid to those forced to flee their homes. Each of the four tents set up in Trafalgar Square dealt with key strands of UNHCR's work: shelter, food, education, and rebuilding.

Thank you to those YPN members who volunteered at the event! If you would like to get involved in the work of UNHCR, visit [www.unhcr.org/getinvolved](http://www.unhcr.org/getinvolved). We also recommend you visit UNHCR's profiles on Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, MySpace and Flickr.

**YPN**  
Young Professionals Network



## Gaza in the spotlight

On 15 July YPN's Working for Peace group held a screening of 'Gaza: Reign of the Rockets' at Channel 4's London studios. The film, part of Channel 4's acclaimed Unreported World series, focuses on the conflict in the Gaza Strip. Travelling across Israel, Gaza and the West Bank, the film-makers focus on the Hamas government, and the effects of the siege on Gaza, international isolation and virtual civil war.

The screening was followed by a discussion with the film's director, Ed Watts; Yossi Mekelberg, Associate Fellow of the Middle East Programme at Chatham House and Head of International Relations at Regent's College; Darrin Waller, former Executive Director of Medical Aid for Palestinians; and Tim Llewellyn, former Middle East correspondent for the BBC.



© Edward Watts/Unreported World

## THE YPN INTERVIEW

Name: PHIL COX

Place of work: EVERYWHERE

Phil Cox is a film-maker. He has worked for leading broadcasters such as the BBC, Channel 4 and Al-Jazeera, as well as Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch. In 2004 he was awarded the Rory Peck Award for his coverage of the Darfur conflict. Phil is a member of the Young Professionals Network.



### What do you do?

I am the director of Native Voice Films, a collective of independent film-makers. I am also a trustee of REACT – Refugee Education Across Conflict Trust – a not-for-profit organisation which aims to provide young people displaced by conflict with the educational tools to equip them to re-enter their societies as equals.

### What do you most enjoy about your job?

Coming into the heart of extreme human experience and having an excuse to be there!

Today, with the technology available, one person with a small camera can bring to a wide audience fascinating and unseen experiences from people's lives. From the shoe maker to the dustman to the rebel fighter to the refugee – you can enter these lives and bring them to people around the world. Working as I do in reportage, I am often in areas where people are facing extreme choices. One sees a lot of tragedy, but one also sees people rise to face adversity with great courage and bravery.

I also enjoy working alone: just me and the subjects creating a film that can best represent their experience. Working in REACT is fantastic too. It is a rewarding thing to deliver concrete needs and see immediate results for Darfuri children.

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

I think ethical and moral dilemmas are part and parcel of the job – when to be respectful; when not to film; and when it is essential to do so. I have worked in the desert war of Darfur a lot – as well as in Iraq and Colombia – so there is the physical danger, which is momentarily scary. But trickier is filming grief, death and other sensitive moments. I remember filming massacre sites and the emotional aftermath of relatives and wondering if the footage would eventually be shown between commercials and evening entertainment.

As film-makers today, whatever we do, we need to question how we represent our subjects – especially when there is so much censorship and distortion from editors and broadcasters.

### What inspires you to do what you do?

Sometimes films can make a difference. Always creatively frustrated, I am as a rule sceptical about my work. But my films about Darfur and indigenous people in Argentina have been used by activists and the International Criminal Court – which makes better use of them than just evening TV.

Something else that was pretty inspiring was seeing the effect of REACT's book delivery to Darfuri refugees. Entirely on their own initiative, children from one refugee camp picked up their new REACT text books and marched all day to give them to fellow students in another camp.

### How did you get to where you are today?

I studied literature and languages at Edinburgh University, where I wrote my Master's dissertation about the Latin American poet Pablo Neruda. I think I wanted to be a writer but suffered from a lack of patience.

While in Cuba, finishing some work on a writer, I met some Swiss film-makers. They asked me to help them with their documentary. I was hooked. Tired of the academic world, I felt that making documentaries was both theoretical and very physical. And I loved storytelling, but hadn't known before how I could possibly become a storyteller.

Upon my return to London I began to make my own films. Nobody ever replied to my job requests, despite sending out over a thousand CVs. But London is a hub for the world media and film

industry, so there were always people I could learn from. I have found that being good with people, being able to open them up and communicate with them, is fundamental to being a good documentary film-maker. Somehow I think I had that knack.

My work with REACT was a response to a need: a lot of children needed something important. They asked us for it, and it turned out we could provide it. It's that simple.

### What do you feel has been your greatest professional achievement to date?

I just spent six months tracking down the first high-ranking Sudanese commander to whistle-blow on his government's policy of genocide in Darfur. I did an interview with him – which was extraordinary, as I personally knew many of the people who lived in villages his men had attacked and pillaged.

Another big one was setting up REACT with my partner Giovanna Stopponi. We were asked by hundreds of Darfuri children to find their text books for them: that way, if they ever returned to Sudan, they would not be destined for the bottom tiers of society. I didn't think it was possible but Giovanna said, 'Nothing is impossible!'

She was right. At the beginning of this year we finally delivered over 2,000 books and are now working in partnership with UNICEF and the British Council to serve thousands of more refugees. It just feels really great – much better than working in the media!

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

Watch the media carefully. See how films and TV are put together. At the heart of it is curiosity: to be a director or film-maker, one has to be curious about people and the world, and leave prejudices and judgments behind (or at least allow them to be explored!).

Storytelling is essential. You need to start making your own small films, about small things in the world around you. You don't have to travel abroad!

Then contact other film-makers and production people; nothing is harder than working alone. Pitch ideas and stories. Be very hard-skinned! Just get out there. Film!

### How do you feel that the UN is portrayed in the media and in documentaries about conflict situations?

The problem is that the press generally loves a negative, sensational story. The good ones don't often get a look in. That's really the rub of it.

If I have my journalist hat on, I would say that we always need to look coldly and honestly at any organisation and report on what we see – good or bad. So the UN needs to be looked at not just for its honourable founding principles, but also for its tricky day-to-day work and the people who work for it around the world.

Any organisation – certainly one as vast as the UN – is going to have problems, both as a result of bad practice and bad eggs. So when negative stories come out about the UN I think we should be careful not to think this means the UN as a whole is worthless. I have yet to meet anyone who seriously thinks the UN should disappear (though I guess there are a few crazies in a certain powerful country!).

We all in general support the UN – and must continue to do so – but that doesn't mean we should be afraid of speaking out, criticising and voicing opinions. YPN, I think, has a vital role to play here, serving as not just a social network but also a discussion and an action network too. In YPN we are supposed to have young, sharp, brilliant minds, no? So let's speak up and challenge those 'above'!

### What can our members do to support your work?

Visit [www.reactweb.org](http://www.reactweb.org). We are looking for people to come and help! Please contact us!

Any comments on this interview? Send them to [yjn@una.org.uk](mailto:yjn@una.org.uk)

## A compact for change

We are pleased to announce that UNA-UK is now an observer to the UK Network of the UN Global Compact. The network is a coalition of UK companies which are signatories to the UN Global Compact – the initiative launched in 2000 by Kofi Annan to harness the power of the corporate sector in support of a set of ten core values across the areas of human rights, labour standards, the environment and anti-corruption.

The UK Network aims to promote the Global Compact principles in the UK business community and serves as a forum in which UK signatories can improve their performance and reporting on Global Compact principles. It has over 30 corporate participants – among them BP, Diageo, HSBC, Shell and Rio Tinto – and seven observer organisations that, alongside UNA-UK, include Amnesty International, Oxfam and Transparency International.

UNA-UK's participation in the UK Network will serve as an important platform for YPN's upcoming work around business and the Millennium Development Goals.

[www.una.org.uk/yjn/business\\_mdgs.htm](http://www.una.org.uk/yjn/business_mdgs.htm)

### UK NETWORK MEMBER RIO TINTO OFFERS \$1 MILLION FOR ADVANCING SUSTAINABILITY

Open to all not-for-profit organisations working on economic, environmental and social sustainability, the 2008 Rio Tinto Alcan Prize for Sustainability awards \$1 million to one leader in this field. Also up for grabs are grants of \$15,000 each, awarded to the nine NGOs on the short list.

If you know of any organisations which fit the above description, we encourage you to invite them to apply before the deadline in mid-September.

Visit [www.alcanprizeforsustainability.com](http://www.alcanprizeforsustainability.com) for further details.

Read more about the UK Network of the UN Global Compact at [www.ungc-uk.net](http://www.ungc-uk.net)

## Stay in touch!



**Mark Rusling**  
UNA-UK Campaigns  
& Education Officer

I hope you are all well and enjoying the summer, wherever in the world you find yourself. For those of you who have now left university, I would like to thank you for all your hard work for UNYSA. But graduating does not have to mean an end to your contribution to supporting the UN: if you are not already a member of UNA-UK's Young Professionals Network, why not join? You can do so online at [www.una.org.uk/ypn](http://www.una.org.uk/ypn)

For those of you who are still running UNYSA branches next year, can you please make sure that I have up-to-date contact

details for your group's committee? Please also include a postal address for me to send your freshers fair materials to. As in previous years, we'll be sending a selection of UNYSA goodies to every UNYSA group to help them attract members at the start of the new academic year.

Have all those Model UN enthusiasts out there had a look at our new MUN website? Visit [www.una.org.uk/mun](http://www.una.org.uk/mun) for a one-stop shop for everything you need to know about Model UN. If you have any comments or suggestions, e-mail me on [rusling@una.org.uk](mailto:rusling@una.org.uk)

## A year to be proud of

Sissi Penttilä is President of Birmingham University UNA



### Birmingham University UNA has had an incredible

year. We have expanded our membership and activities, and have conducted innovative campaigns and held a hugely popular series of Model UN events.

Our centrepiece campaign focused on raising awareness about the plight of asylum seekers. For this campaign we teamed up with Birmingham Citizens, a network of local faith and women's groups, refugee associations, trade unions, schools, and other neighbourhood organisations.

There was enormous demand for our Model UN sessions, and in the second term we needed to start running them every two weeks. Our topics ranged from environmental issues, such as whaling, to acutely sensitive ones such as abortion and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. These sessions sparked fierce debates, which more often than not carried on beyond the committee room. We were also pleased to take part in several Model UN conferences over the year, in Oxford, Sussex, London and Puebla, Mexico. We congratulate Marek Zaremba-Pike and Faizan Bhat – both of whom are UNYSA Youth Council members – for receiving awards for their outstanding performances!

We were particularly proud to host UNYSA's Annual Conference in March, featuring engaging speakers and an inspiring documentary – and of course the exciting election of a new UNYSA Youth Council. Other highlights of our year included hosting talks by Sajida Madni of Birmingham Citizens and Paul Usiskin of Peace Now UK, as well as participating in the inaugural event in UNA-UK's major conference series, 'Climate Challenge: A call to action'. We finished off with a sunny awareness-raising day at the university's annual charity event, The Vale Festival – this year inspired by the theme of 'Water is Life'.

On behalf of the current committee of Birmingham University UNA, I would like to thank UNA-UK for its support, and pay tribute to the previous committee for making the year so fun and memorable!



UNYSA  
United Nations Youth and Student Association



# Show the red card to child labour!

**The World Day Against Child Labour – held every year on 12 June** – seeks to build on the growing international consensus against child labour. This year the day highlighted the ways in which child labour and poverty constitute barriers to education, barriers which must come down if children around the world are to live fulfilled lives. Education provides a means for children to lift themselves and their families out of poverty. It is also a massively important development investment: a recent International Labour Organization (ILO) study estimated that the economic benefits of replacing child labour with universal education exceed the costs by a ratio of more than six to one.

The ILO estimates that 165 million children between five and 14 worldwide are involved in child labour, often working long hours in dangerous conditions. The Millennium Development Goals call on the international community to ensure that, by 2015, all children complete a full course of primary education, and to ensure that there is gender parity in education. Currently, many poor families cannot afford school fees and have to prioritise the income from a working child over that child's education. And when faced with the choice between sending a boy or girl to school, parents often opt to keep the girl at home.

On 12 June, Juan Somavia, Director-General of the ILO, challenged the international community 'to offer hope to the child labourers of the world by making their rights a reality, ensuring that they have quality education and training which can lead them towards a future of decent work'.

Since 2002, the ILO has been working with FIFA on the Red Card Campaign, which uses international football competitions to foster a world movement against all forms of child labour. Fronted by football luminaries such as Pelé, Zinedine Zidane and Ronaldo, the campaign mobilises communities and sports associations in vulnerable neighbourhoods throughout the world to give the 'red card' to those who seek to exploit children in this way.

To read more about the ILO's work to eliminate child labour visit [www.ilo.org](http://www.ilo.org)

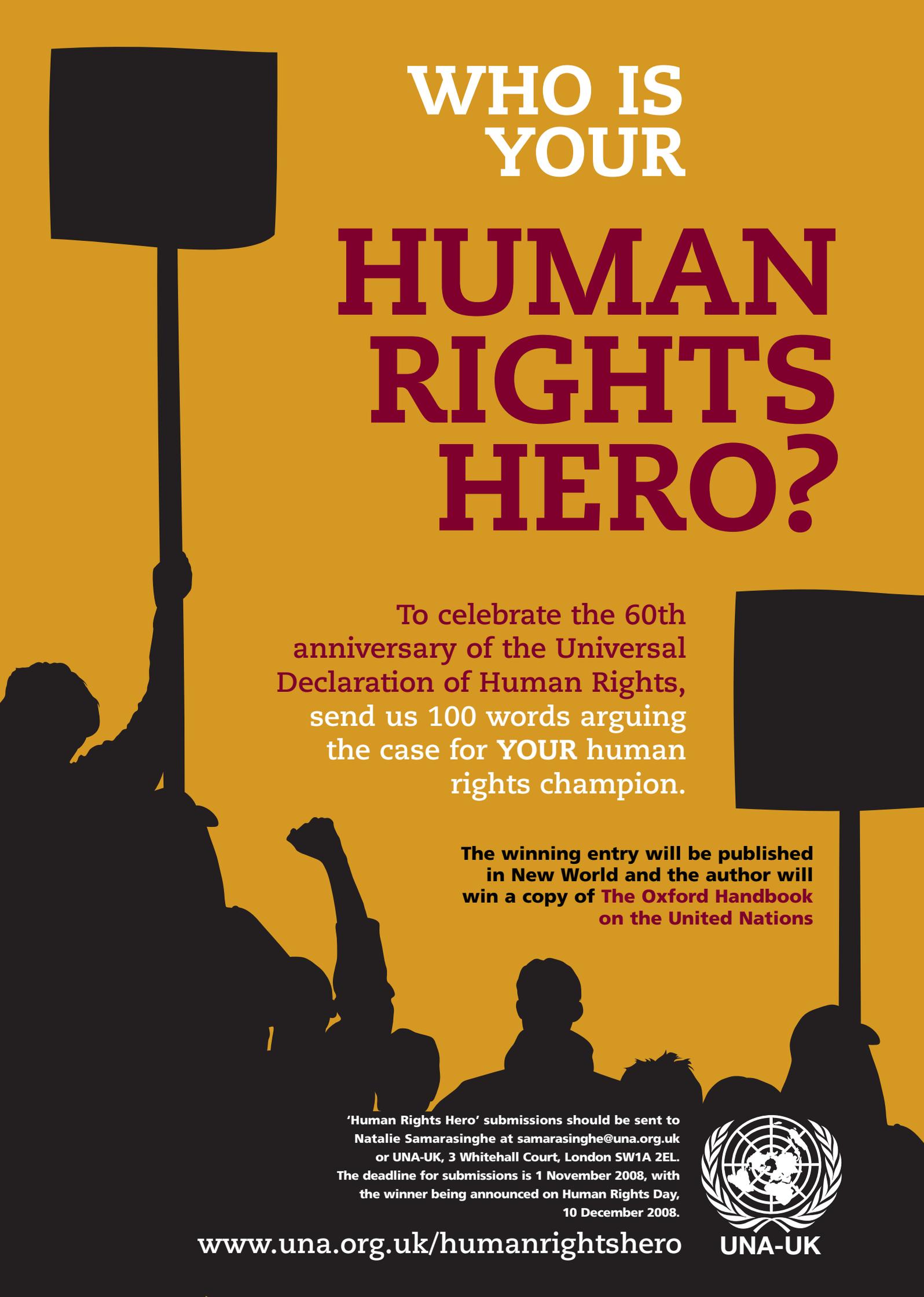


## RECOMMENDED EDUCATIONAL RESOURCE

### **SCREAM** Supporting Children's Rights through Education, the Arts and the Media

SCREAM is an ILO campaign which equips educators, both formal and informal, to help young people understand the causes and consequences of child labour, and get them engaged in its elimination. The emphasis is on encouraging young people to express themselves through different forms of artistic media, in a manner rooted in their culture and traditions. The SCREAM education pack features 14 flexible educational modules and activities which can be adapted to a year-long programme or a short workshop.

The SCREAM education pack is available in 14 languages. To download it visit [www.ilo.org](http://www.ilo.org)



WHO IS  
YOUR

# HUMAN RIGHTS HERO?

To celebrate the 60th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, send us 100 words arguing the case for **YOUR** human rights champion.

The winning entry will be published in *New World* and the author will win a copy of **The Oxford Handbook on the United Nations**

'Human Rights Hero' submissions should be sent to Natalie Samarasinghe at [samarasinghe@una.org.uk](mailto:samarasinghe@una.org.uk) or UNA-UK, 3 Whitehall Court, London SW1A 2EL. The deadline for submissions is 1 November 2008, with the winner being announced on Human Rights Day, 10 December 2008.

[www.una.org.uk/humanrightshero](http://www.una.org.uk/humanrightshero)



UNA-UK