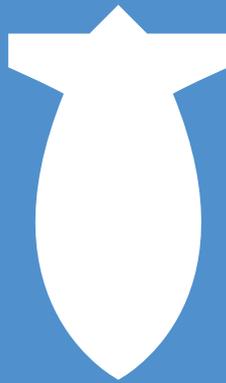




# *The United Nations Matters*

*Teacher's Handbook*



'The United Nations Matters' uses an interactive approach to support teaching and learning about the UN in UK secondary schools. Funded by the UK Foreign & Commonwealth Office, it is an updated version of a 2010 teaching resource produced by the United Nations Association of the UK (UNA-UK) and UNESCO Associated Schools in the UK.

The original resource was authored by Anne Breivik (UNESCO Associated Schools), Mary Morrison (education consultant) and Natalie Samarasinghe (UNA-UK). The Anglo European School (Essex), Cirencester Deer Park School (Cirencester) and St Peter's School (Exeter) provided valuable feedback on draft versions, and the Project Advisory Group consisting of Bob Willey, Hilary Hunt, Professor Lynn Davies and Michaela Alfred-Kamara also provided helpful comments and suggestions.

UNA-UK is responsible for the choice and presentation of issues contained in this updated version and for the opinions expressed therein, which are not necessarily those of UNESCO or the UN and do not commit these organisations.

### **More about UNA-UK**

The United Nations Association of the UK (UNA-UK) is the UK's leading source of independent information and analysis on UN issues and a UK-wide grassroots movement for the United Nations. UNA-UK aims to increase knowledge of the UN and stimulate thought and debate about how to make it stronger, more credible and more effective.

A core objective is to raise young people's awareness of the UN and the range of problems it is trying to solve. Our **Generation United Nations** programme supports teaching and learning about the UN, both under the formal curriculum and through Model UN activities.

For more information visit [www.una.org.uk](http://www.una.org.uk) or contact [membership@una.org.uk](mailto:membership@una.org.uk) or **020 7766 3456**.

### **More about UNESCO Associated Schools**

UNESCO Associated Schools in the UK is part of a global network of schools promoting quality education. The UK network supports the integration of international perspectives in schools and promotes the values of UNESCO, including human rights, mutual respect and cultural diversity. We work to better prepare children and young people in the UK for the challenges of an increasingly complex and interdependent world.

To find out more, visit [www.unesco.org.uk/associatedschools](http://www.unesco.org.uk/associatedschools) or contact Robert Parrington, UK National Coordinator of UNESCO Associated Schools, on [R.Parrington@kingston.ac.uk](mailto:R.Parrington@kingston.ac.uk).

For more information about the international network of UNESCO Associated Schools, visit [www.unesco.org/education/asp](http://www.unesco.org/education/asp)

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UNA-UK

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GENERATION  
UNITED NATIONS



United Nations  
Educational, Scientific and  
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UNESCO Associated Schools

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*“The United Nations works for peace, development and human rights. It has helped to transform the lives of millions of people. An effective UN is key to the security and prosperity of the UK and of all other countries in the world.*

*The Foreign & Commonwealth Office is leading UK action to support a United Nations which better integrates political, security, development, humanitarian and human rights efforts, including through strengthened UN leadership, so that it can deliver earlier and better.*

*As a former member of the United Nations Association - UK (UNA-UK) I know the value of their work and I applaud them for promoting learning about the UN. By using this resource, you will grapple with many of the issues that preoccupied me when I joined UNA-UK. It remains the case now, as it was then, that it will be the world’s young people who provide the ideas and momentum to address many of these problems in the future.*

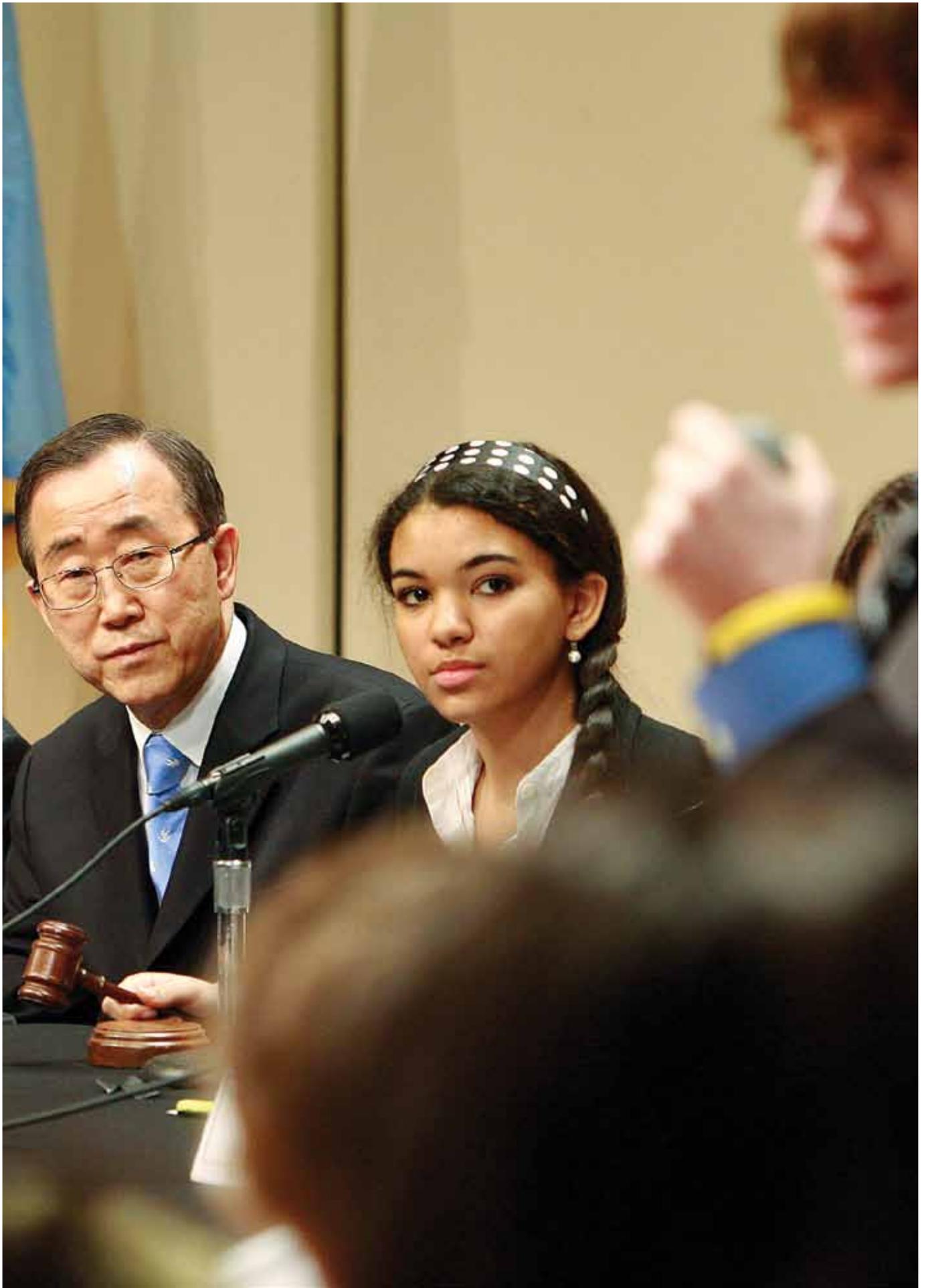
*Although I had little thought of one day becoming Foreign Secretary, membership of UNA-UK broadened my horizons and deepened my fascination with politics and world affairs. I hope that resources such as ‘The UN Matters’ will stimulate the interest of students across the UK in the role of the United Nations, as UNA-UK did for me.”*

**Rt Hon. William Hague MP**  
**Secretary of State for Foreign & Commonwealth Affairs**



**Foreign &  
Commonwealth  
Office**

UNA-UK is grateful to the UK Foreign & Commonwealth Office for its generous support of this project. To find out more about the FCO’s work, **visit [www.fco.gov.uk](http://www.fco.gov.uk)**



**UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon listens to young people.**  
© UN Photo/Mark Garten

# The United Nations Matters Teacher’s Handbook

This resource pack has been created to support Key Stage 3 and 4 Citizenship (England) and Education for Sustainable Development and Global Citizenship (Wales). It is also relevant to Learning for Life and Work (Northern Ireland), One Planet and Sustainable Development (Scotland), as well as Geography; History; Local and Global Citizens; Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education; Politics; and Religious and Moral Education. The pack supports the ‘Global Dimension’ in all parts of the UK.

This resource aims to develop students’ awareness and understanding of the United Nations (UN) system and the global issues it tackles. It encompasses five lessons that can either be run as a full scheme of work or used independently. Each lesson includes teacher’s notes, lesson plans and student worksheets. Lessons 1-4 are 60-minute lessons, while lesson 5, which features a simulation of the UN Security Council, comprises one 60-minute preparatory lesson and a 60- or 120-minute simulation.

Lessons 1-4 include a reference to a corresponding international day – i.e. United Nations Day on 24 October for Lesson 1. Celebrating international days is a great way to draw attention to the work of the United Nations and its many agencies.

On the enclosed CD ROM (see inside back cover) you will find all the components of this pack: lesson plans, student worksheets and additional supporting resources, including: materials for the Security Council simulation, a glossary, and official and student-friendly versions of the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights and Convention on the Rights of the Child.

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# Introduction

## Core messages

This teaching pack contains the following core messages:

- The UN was established in the aftermath of the Second World War to help stabilise international relations and give peace a more secure foundation.
- The primary aims of the UN are: secure international peace, eliminate poverty and protect human rights.
- The UN and its family of agencies are engaged in a vast array of work to improve the lives of people in the UK and around the world.
- The work of the UN is vital because the challenges facing the world today – from climate change to infectious diseases – are not localised. They require international action. The UN provides a unique and vital platform for generating the global solutions needed to address these global problems.
- The UN is not a ‘world government’. Its activities are governed by its 193 member states and are the result of (often complex) political negotiations.

## Curriculum and subject links

This teaching pack demonstrates the relevance of the UN to international affairs and how the UN makes a positive contribution to peace and security, poverty alleviation and human rights. The lessons enable students to understand global issues from a range of perspectives, and develop their own viewpoints on how best to tackle them. The lessons actively encourage important citizenship skills such as participation, cooperation and collaboration, negotiation, diplomacy and conflict resolution.

### England

This pack comprehensively covers an important part of the Citizenship curriculum in England (see details below) and also delivers the eight key concepts of the Global Dimension – Sustainable Development, Conflict Resolution, Interdependence, Diversity, Human Rights, Social Justice, Global Citizenship and Values & Perceptions – and in so doing prepares students to be active and engaged global citizens. In addition, the pack also covers elements of the Geography curriculum in England.

**1.1 Democracy & Justice:** Participating actively in different kinds of decision-making and voting in order to influence public

life; weighing up what is fair and unfair in different situations; understanding that justice is fundamental to a democratic society and exploring the role of law in maintaining order and resolving conflict; and considering how justice, diversity, tolerance, respect and freedom are valued by people with different beliefs, backgrounds and traditions within a changing democratic society.

**1.2 Rights & Responsibilities:** Exploring different kinds of rights and obligations and how these affect both individuals and communities; understanding that individuals, organisations and governments have responsibilities to ensure that rights are balanced, supported and protected; investigating ways in which rights can compete and conflict; and understanding that hard decisions have to be made to try to balance these.

**1.3 Identities & Diversity:** Exploring community cohesion and the different forces that bring about change in communities over time.

**2.1 Critical Thinking & Enquiry:** Pupils will be able to engage with different ideas, opinions, beliefs and values when exploring topical and controversial issues and problems; research, plan and undertake enquiries into issues and problems using a range of information and sources; and analyse and evaluate sources, questioning different values, ideas and viewpoints and recognising bias.

**2.2 Advocacy & Representation:** Pupils will be able to: explain their opinions to others through discussions, formal debates and voting; communicate an argument, taking account of different viewpoints and drawing on what they have learnt through research, action and debate; justify their argument, giving reasons to persuade others to think again, change or support them; and represent the views of others, with which they may or may not agree.

**Assessment for Learning:** The lessons have been created according to Assessment for Learning (AfL) techniques. AfL involves using classroom assessment to raise achievement. AfL works on the basis that students will make the most significant improvement if they understand the aim of their learning, where they are in relation to this aim and how they can achieve the aim.

### Wales

The pack helps deliver key aspects of Personal and Social Education (PSE) and Education for Sustainable Development

and Global Citizenship (ESDGC) in Wales. It covers many aspects of the seven interconnected themes for ESDGC – Wealth and Poverty, Climate Change, Identity and Culture, Consumption and Waste, Choices and Decisions, Health and the Natural Environment. The pack also supports elements of the History and Geography curricula in Wales.

## ESDGC

### Skills – develop communication and thinking across the curriculum:

- developing and presenting information and ideas
- forming opinions and making decisions

### Wealth and poverty:

- develop a sense of fairness and justice about access to resources and wealth
- develop opinions about exploitation and poverty
- understand that inequalities exist between people within countries and between countries

### Choices and decisions:

- develop opinions about the denial of human rights
- appreciate the value of a well-balanced and well-supported argument
- appreciate the benefits of resolving conflicts peacefully and to understand:
  - the complexity of making decisions
  - what is meant by basic human rights
  - the principles of democracy
  - how conflict can arise from different views about global issues

### Identity and culture:

- develop an insight into their own values
- develop respect for themselves, their culture and others
- understand how to recognise and challenge effectively expressions of prejudice, racism and stereotyping

## PSE

### Skills – develop thinking and communication:

- consider other views to inform opinions and make informed decisions and choices effectively
- listen attentively in different situations and respond appropriately
- explain links between cause and effect
- take part in debates and vote on issues
- work both independently and cooperatively
- adapt to new situations

### Active citizenship:

- develop respect for themselves and others
- value and celebrate diversity and equality of opportunity locally, nationally and globally
- be moved by injustice, exploitation and denial of human rights
- understand:
  - their rights, e.g. the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child

- their responsibilities as young citizens in Wales
- how young people can have their views heard and can influence decision-making
- topical local and global issues.

Please note that while schools in Wales are required to deliver ESDGC and PSE, the Common Understanding and the Framework are both guidance documents developed to support schools. ESDGC is usually delivered in a cross-curricular fashion.

## Northern Ireland

The pack helps deliver aspects of the Learning for Life and Work curriculum in Northern Ireland, in particular Key Stage 3 and 4 Local and Global Citizenship units:

- **Diversity and Inclusion:** considering the range and extent of diversity in societies locally and globally, and the challenges and opportunities which diversity and inclusion present.
- **Equality and Social Justice:** understanding that society needs to safeguard individual and collective rights and ensuring that everyone is treated equally and fairly.
- **Democracy and Active Participation:** understanding how to participate in, and to influence democratic processes and to be aware of some key democratic institutions and their role in promoting inclusion, justice and democracy.
- **Human Rights and Social Responsibility:** understanding the principles of human rights and of social responsibility, and that a globally accepted values base exists, within the various human rights international instruments, which outline the rights of individuals and groups in democratic societies.

## Scotland

The pack delivers aspects of the One Planet and Sustainable Development components of the Curriculum for Excellence, with a particular focus on global citizenship. Global citizenship is a key learning context. It is embedded across all eight curriculum areas to ensure that young people will be able to play a full and active part in society – politically, socially, economically, environmentally and culturally – and understand Scotland’s role within the wider world. Global citizenship brings together:

- **Education for citizenship:** addressing the exercising of rights and responsibilities within communities at local, national and global levels.
- **International education:** helping to prepare young people for life and active participation in a global multicultural society, by developing their knowledge and understanding of the world.
- **Sustainable development:** learning about the importance of enabling people throughout the world to satisfy their basic needs and improve the quality of their lives without compromising the quality of life for future generations.

# The United Nations: Working for us all

*The aim of this lesson is to introduce students to the United Nations (UN) system and how it works to achieve international peace and security, fight poverty, and protect human rights. Students will learn some key UN terminology, and will focus on the roles and functions of the main UN agencies.*

## What is the UN and why was it created?

The origins of the United Nations lie in the Second World War. During the war, 26 nations forged a coalition to fight the Axis powers. They agreed not to enter into any separate deals with Nazi Germany and its allies, and adopted a set of principles to underpin their efforts: freedom, human rights and justice for all.

The UN embodies these principles and represents the culmination of the Allies' efforts. Founded in 1945, in the aftermath of the war and the horrors of the Holocaust, they hoped that the UN would be able to prevent such catastrophes from happening in the future by stabilising international relations and giving peace a more secure foundation.

## What are the aims of the UN?

The 'blue helmets' worn by UN peacekeepers are among the most common images associated with the UN, and conflict resolution, peacekeeping and peacebuilding continue to be core activities of the organisation. But the UN does more than that.

### The primary aims of the UN are:

**AIM 1 Secure international peace**

**AIM 2 Eliminate poverty**

**AIM 3 Protect human rights**

The UN believes that peace, development and human rights are interdependent. They are mutually reinforcing objectives and are often called the 'three pillars' of the UN. Today, these 'pillars' cover a vast array of issues, including sustainable development, gender, population, health, education and trade, as well as issues that were not on the global agenda in 1945, such as climate change, international terrorism and cyber security. From its headquarters in New York City to its local offices around the world, the UN tackles all these issues and works to improve the lives of people everywhere.

## Who runs the UN?

The UN is not a 'world government'. Its purpose is to bring all nations of the world together to work for peace and sustainable development, based on the principles of justice, human dignity and the wellbeing of all people.

The UN is made up of 193 countries known as 'member states'. The member states finance the UN's work and govern its activities. To facilitate its role as an international forum for discussion, the UN has adopted six official languages: Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish.

UN staff are international civil servants and answer to the United Nations alone for their activities. When joining the UN, staff members take an oath not to seek or receive instructions from any government or outside authority.

The UN symbol – a world map surrounded by olive branches on a blue background – symbolises the tasks of the organisation: promoting peace and cooperation across the world.

## Does the UN have a constitution?

The Charter of the United Nations is essentially the constitutional document of the UN. It sets out the structure and powers of the main bodies of the UN. The Charter came into force – i.e. became legally-binding – on 24 October 1945, and all member states of the UN must adhere to its provisions. This day is now celebrated as United Nations Day across the world.

## How is the UN structured?

The UN is made up of many bodies, each with a different function and remit. Two of the most well-known bodies are:

**The General Assembly:** the UN's 193 member states meet in the General Assembly, which is the closest thing there is to a world parliament. Each country, large or small, rich or poor, has a single vote. While the Assembly's decisions are not binding on member states, they carry the weight of world governmental opinion.

**The Security Council** is responsible for maintaining peace, and tries to settle conflicts that threaten international security. All UN member states must respect and abide by its decisions. It can set up peacekeeping operations in countries. These

**Over 500 multinational treaties have been enacted through the efforts of the United Nations, including on:**



**human rights**



**terrorism**



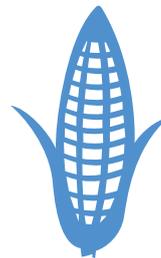
**international crime**



**refugees**



**disarmament**



**agriculture**



**the oceans**

operations protect civilians and help warring parties to resolve their differences peacefully. The Security Council has 15 members of which five are permanent: China, France, Russia, the UK and the USA. The permanent members can veto any major proposal in the Security Council.

***How does the UN work to achieve its aims?***

The work of the United Nations reaches every corner of the globe. Much of this work is carried out by UN funds, programmes and specialised agencies. These are part of the UN system but operate as independent bodies. They cover a vast range of areas including promoting democracy, human rights, good governance, economic and social development, international health, refugee protection and disaster relief.

Examples include: the UN Children’s Fund (UNICEF), the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR), the World Health Organization and the Universal Postal Union.

***The UN’s aims are lofty. Has it achieved any of them?***

- Since 1945 the UN has assisted in negotiating more than 170 peace settlements that have ended regional conflicts and has run 67 peacekeeping missions
- More than 50 million refugees fleeing persecution and violence have received help from the UN Refugee Agency

- The UN has created a comprehensive system of international laws to protect human rights, with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights as its cornerstone
- During the first UN decade on water (1981– 1990), more than a billion people gained access to safe drinking water for the first time in their lives
- The World Food Programme, the world’s largest humanitarian agency, provides food to some 90 million people in 80 countries every year
- UN education programmes for women have helped to raise the female literacy rate in developing countries from 36 per cent in 1970 to 79 per cent in 2007
- Polio has been virtually eliminated from all but four countries – Afghanistan, India, Nigeria and Pakistan – as a result of the Global Polio Eradication Initiative, the largest international public health effort to date

For more information about the UN system go to **www.un.org**

**24 OCTOBER – UNITED NATIONS DAY**

The United Nations was founded on 24 October in 1945 and this date has been marked as United Nations Day since 1948. Celebrating the UN’s birthday is a great way to raise awareness about the work of the UN in your school. To find out more go to **www.una.org.uk/education**

# The United Nations: Keeping the peace

*This lesson develops students' understanding of the role of the United Nations (UN) in securing peace around the world. Students deepen their understanding of armed conflicts and the UN's response to them. Students create an action plan to resolve a conflict situation.*

## **How does the UN work for peace and security?**

The UN has played a major role in helping warring parties to reach peaceful solutions through discussions and negotiation. The Security Council is the UN body tasked with maintaining peace and security.

## **How does the UN try to secure and maintain international peace?**

There are different types of conflict and security challenges that the UN must tackle. Examples include: wars between states, civil wars, terrorism and the proliferation of nuclear weapons. The UN has different means for dealing with these challenges. For instance, it works to:

- Prevent conflict through mediation and dispute resolution
- Enforce peace settlements by dispatching peacekeepers
- Promote reconciliation through peacebuilding
- Rebuild countries emerging from conflict
- Support justice and accountability through international tribunals
- Create international rules e.g. on conduct during war, war crimes and arms control

## **What role does the Security Council play?**

When a particular armed conflict is brought before the Security Council, it usually first asks the parties involved in the conflict to reach agreement by peaceful means, for example, through negotiations. If fighting breaks out, continues or gets worse, the Council tries to secure a ceasefire. The Council might then send a peacekeeping mission to the troubled area.

## **What are peacekeeping operations?**

Peacekeeping is one of the UN's most important functions. Operations encompass military, police and civilian personnel who are deployed to a conflict zone to monitor a ceasefire, help end a conflict and prevent it from re-emerging.

The UN has sent 67 missions to conflict areas across the world. As of April 2012, there are 16 ongoing peacekeeping operations in four continents, carried out by some 120,000 men and women from 118 countries. Countries currently hosting missions include: Cyprus, Haiti, Syria and South Sudan.

## **Does the UN have an army?**

The UN does not have a standing army of its own. It has to seek contributions of troops, equipment and money from its member states every time a peacekeeping mission is set up. Peacekeeping operations are established by the Security Council and directed by the Secretary-General of the UN, often through a special representative who will also act as Head of Mission. The Head of Mission has operational authority over the peacekeeping operation's activities, including military, police and civilian resources, but the troops themselves are accountable to their military commanders.

All operations are governed by three fundamental principles: consent of the warring parties, impartiality, and the non-use of force except in self-defence. Troops wear blue helmets and use white vehicles clearly marked with 'UN'. Civilians, often drawn from the UN itself, also play a key role in peacekeeping missions, looking after legal, financial, administrative, technical and educational functions.

## **How has the UN's peacekeeping role developed?**

The first UN peacekeeping mission was established in 1948 when the Security Council authorised the deployment of military observers to the Middle East to monitor the Armistice Agreement between Israel and its Arab neighbours. Since then, the nature of conflicts has changed.

Today, UN peacekeeping forces are increasingly deployed to internal conflicts and civil wars, often in situations where the consent of the warring parties can no longer be guaranteed. Peacekeeping forces have also been asked to take on a new set of complex tasks including helping to administer war-torn countries, enforce peace settlements and, more recently, intervene to protect civilians at risk and build sustainable peace.

The new operational demands have required the involvement of much larger numbers of civilian as well as military personnel, and brought much greater risks to peacekeepers. Although the military remain the backbone of most peacekeeping operations, the many faces of peacekeeping now include administrators and

economists, police officers and legal experts, electoral observers, human rights monitors, specialists in civil affairs and governance, humanitarian workers and communication experts.

Faced with the rising demand for increasingly complex peace operations, the UN has in the past few years been overstretched and challenged. More UN peacekeepers are now deployed than ever. Since 1999, there has been an eight-fold increase in the number of troops. The UN has worked hard to strengthen its capacity to manage and sustain peacekeeping operations that contribute significantly to the most important function of the organisation – maintaining international peace and security.

### **What happens when a country ignores Security Council decisions?**

When decisions of the Security Council are not complied with, the Council may take several actions to ensure their implementation. It can impose sanctions on trade and other economic activities, or take other specific measures such as arms embargoes and diplomatic restrictions. It can also authorise the use of force in certain instances. This is usually a last resort, to be used only if peaceful means of settling a dispute have been exhausted.

### **Examples of Security Council resolutions include:**

- Authorising the use of force to protect civilians in Libya (2011)
- Enacting sanctions against North Korea in response to its nuclear weapons programme (2006)
- Establishing a transitional administration in East Timor to provide security and maintain order (1999)
- Creating a multinational force to restore the democratically-elected government in Haiti (1994)
- Securing the environment for humanitarian relief to be delivered in Somalia (1992)

For more information about UN peacekeeping, see [www.un.org/en/peacekeeping](http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping)

### **21 SEPTEMBER – INTERNATIONAL DAY OF PEACE**

The International Day of Peace was established in 1981. It is used by the UN to call for a 24-hour global ceasefire to provide hope for people living through war and armed conflict, and show that worldwide peace is possible. For more information, visit [www.internationaldayofpeace.org](http://www.internationaldayofpeace.org)



**A UN peacekeeper from the Kenyan Battalion carries a Croatian child wearing a blue UN beret near the predominantly Serb village near Knin in 1992.** © UN Photo/John Isaac

# Case study:

## *The conflict in Darfur, Sudan*

The following case study highlights some of the challenges the UN faces in implementing its peacekeeping missions. The ongoing conflict in the Darfur region of Sudan has produced one of the world's worst humanitarian crises. Since the conflict began in 2003, around 300,000 people have been killed and almost three million more have fled their homes.

### **Background**

Darfur is a western province of Sudan – one of Africa's largest countries – and is approximately the size of France. The conflict there began in 2003, when Darfuri rebel groups began attacking government targets. These groups claimed that their region has been consistently neglected by the (mostly Arab) government due to discrimination against the region's mostly non-Arab population, leaving it underdeveloped and its people marginalised and impoverished. In retaliation, the Sudanese government launched a military campaign in Darfur that, along with attacks by militia groups, killed thousands of people and displaced millions of civilians.

In 2009 the Sudanese President, Omar Al-Bashir, became the first sitting head of state to be indicted by the International Criminal Court (ICC). He has been charged with war crimes and crimes against humanity that occurred during the military campaign in Darfur. In response, the Sudanese government expelled 16 humanitarian agencies operating in Darfur. In 2011, violence flared up again following the secession of South Sudan, another war-torn area of Sudan that gained independence after a referendum supervised by the UN.

### **International response**

The United Nations first raised the alarm over Darfur in 2003 and finding a solution to the conflict has been a priority ever since. A joint UN and African Union (AU) peacekeeping force arrived in Darfur in January 2008 to try to protect civilians. However, the mission is being held back from doing its job because of a lack of cooperation from the Sudanese government and the international community's failure to provide enough peacekeepers and vital equipment such as helicopters. As of March 2012, there were 19,555 peacekeepers in Darfur, considerably less than the target of 26,000 envisaged for the mission.

### **Current situation**

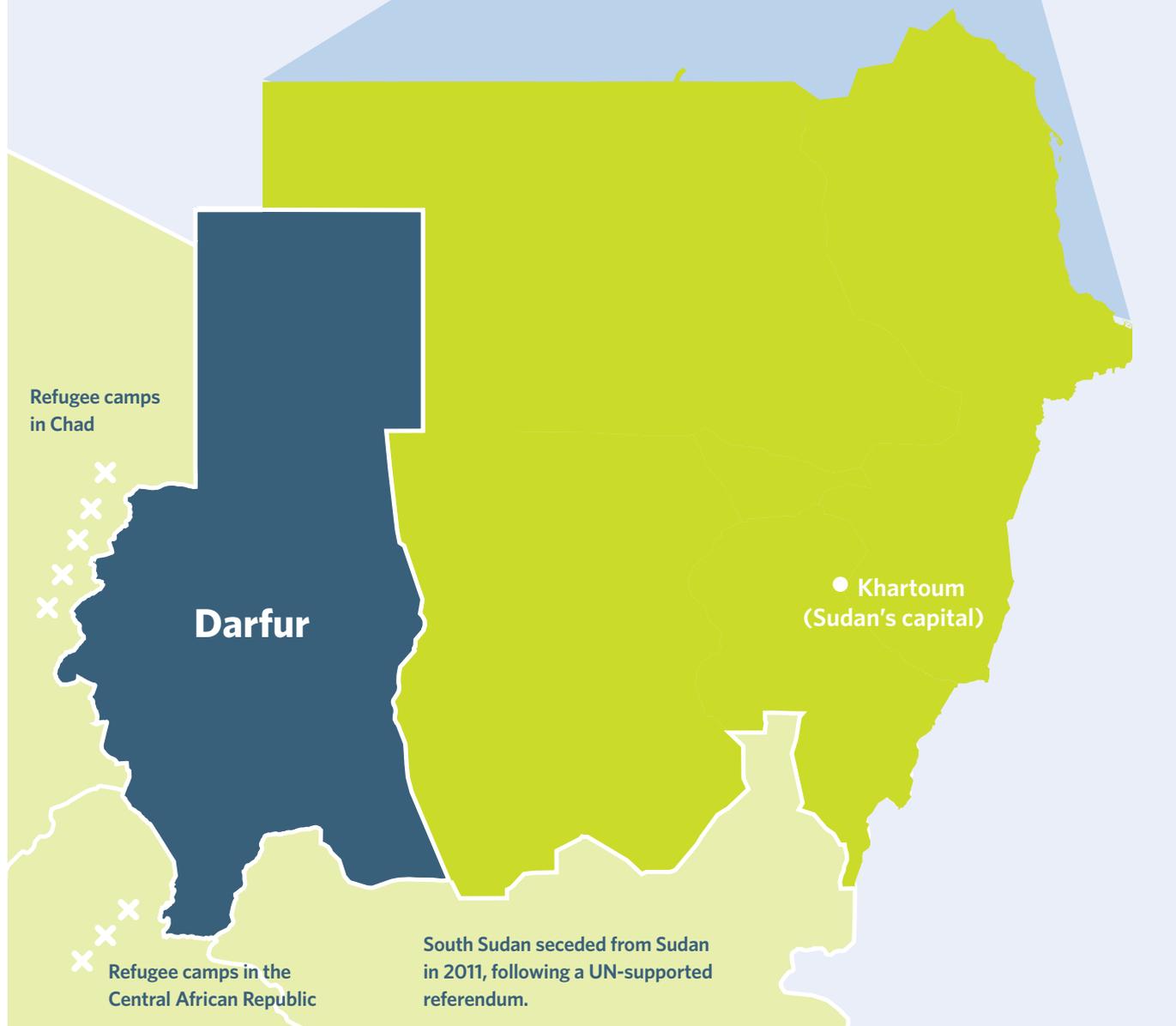
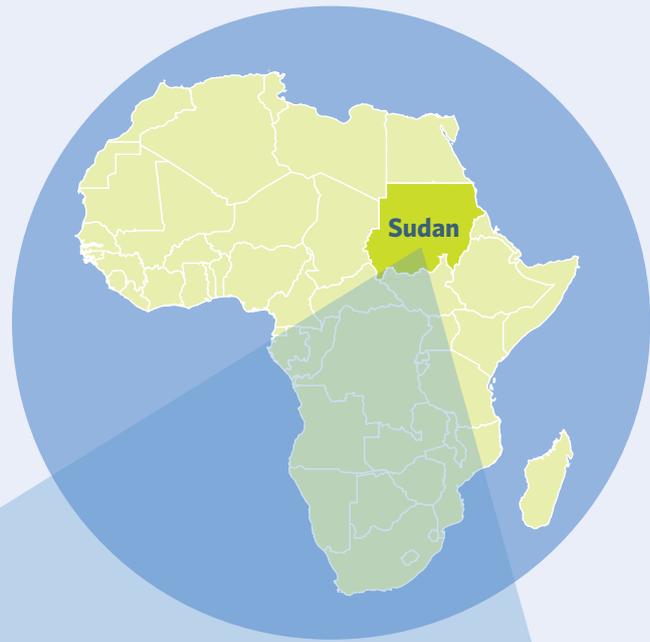
Despite the UN's best efforts, Darfur remains insecure. Along with an estimated 2.6 million civilians displaced in Darfur itself, around 250,000 Darfuris have fled to neighbouring Chad and the Central African Republic, where they now live indefinitely as refugees in makeshift camps. Over 150,000 of these are children – more than half of primary-school age. The camps are critically under-resourced and offer minimal protection, leaving children at risk of being abused, abducted for forced labour or recruited as child soldiers by rebel groups.

Civilians and aid workers are regularly attacked and the ongoing violence makes it difficult for those agencies remaining in Darfur to provide those displaced with the help they need – forcing some to temporarily suspend their operations. Violence also prevents those that fled Darfur from returning home; leaving them dependent on precarious humanitarian aid. A major obstacle to finding a lasting solution to the conflict is the reluctance of the rebel groups and the government to hold talks with each other.

### **Challenges for the UN/AU peacekeeping force in Darfur**

- **Getting the international community to provide more resources for the peacekeeping force**
- **Getting rebel groups and the government to hold talks with each other**
- **Ensuring that humanitarian aid is delivered to those in need**

# Darfur, Sudan



# The United Nations: Fighting poverty

In this lesson, students develop their understanding of the biggest-ever United Nations (UN) initiative to fight poverty – the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Students consider how the UN is working to eliminate poverty through international cooperation. Students improve their public speaking and debating skills. They also focus on girls’ education – Millennium Development Goals 2 and 3.

## What are the Millennium Development Goals?

The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) are eight time-bound objectives which aim to eliminate poverty and inequality throughout the world. They were adopted by world leaders at the UN’s Millennium Summit in 2000.

Every goal has a set of specific targets. For example, one of the targets for Goal 1 is to reduce by half the proportion of people living on less than US \$1.25 a day by 2015, the target year for achieving all goals. Note that the original target was set at \$1 a day, based on the standard poverty threshold applied by the UN. This was later increased to \$1.25 a day following a review of the poverty lines applied by different countries and the value of the dollar in real terms around the world.

## How is the UN trying to meet the goals?

The MDGs have been adopted by all 193 UN member states and shape much of the work of the UN bodies and agencies. While the UN is leading and coordinating global efforts to achieve the



**GOAL 1:**  
Eradicate extreme hunger and poverty



**GOAL 2:**  
Ensure primary education for everyone



**GOAL 3:**  
Promote gender equality and empower women



**GOAL 4:**  
Reduce child mortality



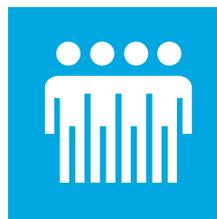
**GOAL 5:**  
Improve maternal health



**GOAL 6:**  
Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases



**GOAL 7:**  
Ensure environmental stability



**GOAL 8:**  
Develop a global partnership for development

MDGs, the primary responsibility for meeting the objectives lies with the member states. For this to happen, international cooperation is essential: rich countries must meet their aid and trade commitments and developing countries must introduce policies that ensure that funding is effectively used and the necessary measures are taken to meet the targets on the ground. The principle of partnership sits at the heart of the efforts to reach the MDGs. With the recent financial and food crises and the growing impact of climate change threatening to reverse the progress made since 2000, only a concerted and joint international effort can ensure that these challenges are met.

### How much progress has been made?

#### The global MDG effort is yielding results and sound progress has been made, for instance:

- The number of people living on less than \$1.25 a day decreased by over 400 million in the period from 1990 to 2005.
- In the developing world as a whole, net enrolment in primary education reached 89 per cent in 2009, up from 82 per cent in 1999.
- Deaths of children under five have declined steadily worldwide – from 12.4 million in 1990 to around 8.1 million in 2009.
- The world is on track to halving the proportion of people without access to safe drinking water by 2015.
- By the end of 2010, 90% of the world’s inhabitants were covered by mobile cellular signal.

However, major challenges remain and progress for some of the targets is too slow. The current economic downturn and increased food prices are having a particularly strong impact on the poorest people across the world. Poor and vulnerable groups are also expected to be hit the hardest by climate change.

#### Examples of remaining challenges include:

- In the developing world, over 15% of people, including a quarter of children under five, are undernourished.
- More than 10 per cent of children of primary-school age are out of school and nearly half the children currently out of school have never had any contact with formal education.
- Over 2.6 billion people still lack flushing toilets and other forms of sanitation.
- Every year, some half a million women and girls die as a result of complications during pregnancy, childbirth or the six weeks following delivery. Almost all of these deaths (99 per cent) occur in developing countries.
- Two thirds of the world’s population have yet to gain internet access.

### Educating girls

In 2010, the ‘two-thirds mark’ for achieving the MDGs, the UN held a major summit to review progress. One of the most important outcomes of this review was a renewed push for girls’ education – widely recognised as central to the achievement of all other goals.

**“We know that investing in [girls] reaps huge rewards. We want to see a generation of educated girls with greater economic opportunities and reduced risks of death and illness in pregnancy and childbirth. Educated women marry later, have fewer and healthier children and send those children to school. They are able to work and become the doctors, engineers and entrepreneurs who will propel their countries towards sustainable economic growth.”**

**Andrew Mitchell**  
UK Secretary of State for International Development

Since the MDGs were launched in 2000, significant progress has been made in this area. Worldwide, enrolment in primary school – for girls and boys – rose from 82% in 1999 to 89% ten years later. The ratio of girls to boys has also improved. For primary education, the figure rose from 91:100 in 1999 to 96:100 ten years later. For secondary school, it rose from 88:100 to 96:100 over that same period.

Yet severe challenges remain. An estimated 67 million children of primary school age are not in school. Of these, the majority live in sub-Saharan Africa and Southern Asia. Increasingly classified as ‘hard to reach’, it is thought that most of these children will never enter a classroom. This group includes children living in urban slums, children from poor rural households, refugees, disabled children and AIDS orphans. Efforts to reach these children are more costly and require a range of strategies.

With the exception of Eastern Asia, where girls slightly outnumber boys in primary school, girls have lagged behind in most parts of the developing world. Equal access to education remains a distant target in Oceania, Africa and the rest of Asia.

*(Sources: UN Millennium Development Goals Report 2011, UNESCO Global Monitoring Report 2011 and the UK Department for International Development)*

### APRIL – GLOBAL ACTION WEEK: EDUCATION FOR ALL

The Global Action Week takes place in April each year. It is a worldwide campaign supported by the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) to raise awareness of the importance of education for all. In the UK, it is organised through ‘Send My Friend to School’, a programme offering schools exciting activities to raise awareness about the importance of universal primary education for all children everywhere. For more information, see [www.sendmyfriend.org](http://www.sendmyfriend.org)

## Case study: Girls' education

As we have seen in the previous section, many children are still missing out on their education. Girls who live in the world's poorer regions are particularly vulnerable when it comes to secondary education. The student worksheet for Lesson 3 asks students to reflect on some of the reasons for this situation, and to develop a campaign for the UN to use to promote girls' education.

While there are actually more girls than boys enrolled at higher levels of schooling in rich nations, only about a third of countries worldwide have achieved gender parity in secondary education. Most of the countries that fall short are in the regions of sub-Saharan Africa, South and West Asia and the Arab States. In Afghanistan, the literacy rate for young women (aged 15-24) is just 18%, compared to 50% for young men. In Côte d'Ivoire and Eritrea, the ratio of girls' to boys' enrolment is less than 0.7:1. Although the ratio is higher in Oceania and the former Soviet Republics, it has dropped during the past decade and is now lower than in 1999. Across the world, the secondary school completion rate is significantly lower for girls than boys, with gaps of around 10% in countries such as Bangladesh and Lesotho.

A lack of education can trap children in poverty and increase vulnerability to disease and exploitation. Girls can drift into some of the worst forms of child labour – a major sector of employment for young girls is domestic work in third-party households – or fall prey to extreme exploitation, including slavery, forced marriage or prostitution.

Educating girls, particularly beyond primary level, does not only improve their lives. It is one of the most effective ways of tackling poverty and promoting development. It boosts economies by increasing the numbers of skilled employees in the workforce. Educated girls are more likely to have better income as adults, to marry later, to have decision-making power within the household, and to rear fewer and healthier children. Studies have shown a striking correlation between mothers' education levels and the number of their children who die before their fifth birthday.

There are a number of factors that can contribute to girls missing out on their education. Poverty can mean that children are forced to work or stay at home to help their families. In some countries, parents faced with the choice of sending a son or daughter to school often choose to send the boy as they believe he will have a better chance of being a provider for the family.

Girls, on the other hand, are seen in many countries as being more suited to looking after younger siblings, older relatives and domestic chores. Cultural attitudes and practices that promote early marriage or are wary of co-education can also encourage the exclusion of girls from school. Access to education is also lower for girls (and boys) who live in rural areas. Inadequate water and sanitation facilities and the safety of the journey to school can also be barriers, particularly in areas where sexual violence is frequent.

The picture is not all bad. Efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goals have resulted in tangible improvements in the lives of thousands of girls around the world. MDG 2 calls for all children to have access to primary education and MDG 3 aims to eliminate gender disparity in both primary and secondary education.

In Malawi, the abolition of primary school fees led to a doubling in girls' enrolment. In Sierra Leone, a statutory requirement making secondary school compulsory significantly raised attendance by girls. In Bangladesh, the 'female secondary school stipend' programme helps girls and their families to cover the costs of education. And in Nepal, an increase in female teachers has helped to slash the gender gap in secondary schools. Change is possible, and ensuring that girls have access to education remains a priority for the UN.

*(Sources: UN Millennium Development Goals Report 2011, UNESCO Global Monitoring Report 2011, UNICEF and the International Labour Organization)*

- For more information about the Millennium Development Goals see, [www.un.org/millenniumgoals](http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals)
- For more information about the UNESCO Global Monitoring Report, see [www.unesco.org/en/efareport](http://www.unesco.org/en/efareport)
- For more information about the International Labour Organization, see [www.ilo.org](http://www.ilo.org)



**With the support of the UN World Food Programme, the Timor-Leste government launched a nationwide initiative to provide schoolchildren with meals. The meals are intended to encourage enrolment and attendance, and increase students' learning capacity. © UN Photo/Martine Perret**

# The United Nations: Protecting human rights

*This lesson aims to highlight the important work of the United Nations (UN) in seeking to ensure that people around the world enjoy their human rights. Students learn about two key UN human rights documents: the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) and the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC). Students develop their critical understanding of children's rights by looking at the experience of a child domestic worker in Haiti.*

## What are human rights?

Human rights are the rights and freedoms to which every human being is entitled, regardless of any distinction. They are inalienable (i.e. can only be limited through appropriate judicial processes) and interdependent (e.g. the right to political participation cannot be fully exercised without the right to education).

Human rights are based on the values of fairness, dignity, justice, equality and respect. These are values that everybody can understand, and that have existed for hundreds of years in different societies all over the world. Human rights were officially recognised as universal values when the UN was set up in 1945.

## The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR)

In order to achieve its aim of promoting human rights, the UN established the Commission on Human Rights in 1946. The Commission's first task was to create a document expressing universal human rights. Eleanor Roosevelt, the widow of American president Franklin D. Roosevelt, was the Chairperson of the Commission. She led a team of seven other people from Australia, Chile, China, France, Lebanon, the Soviet Union and the UK. Agreement on what to include in the document was hard to achieve. Even after the Commission had finally agreed on a text, the UN's member states voted over 1,400 times on the contents of the draft before adopting the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) on 10 December 1948. This day is now celebrated each year across the world as Human Rights Day.

The UDHR is the most famous expression of rights in the world. It serves as a common standard of values for all peoples and nations. It contains 30 rights, each of which corresponds to a particular human need. Although not binding on states, the UDHR has inspired over 80 legally-binding international and regional human rights treaties. One of these treaties is the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC).

## The Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC)

The CRC is the most important international human rights treaty for children and young people under 18. The fact that there is a dedicated treaty for children does not mean that their rights differ to those of adults. Instead, the CRC recognises that children can be more vulnerable than adults and that they sometimes require special protection.

The Convention covers the whole spectrum of human rights - civil, political, economic, social and cultural - in 54 articles that spell out the basic rights and freedoms to which children everywhere are entitled: survival; developing to the fullest; protection from harmful influences, abuse and exploitation; and full participation in family, cultural and social life. One of the main principles of the CRC is that children should have a say in the decisions that affect them in order to ensure that their best interests are always taken into account. The treaty also has two 'optional protocols' (add-on agreements) on children in armed conflict and on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography.

The CRC is the most widely ratified human rights treaty in the world. By ratifying a treaty, governments commit to uphold its provisions and are accountable to the international community. As of April 2012, only three UN member states had not ratified the CRC: Somalia (which has not had a functioning government since 1991), South Sudan (which became an independent state in July 2011) and the United States. Although they have not ratified the treaty, which would involve approval by their legislative bodies, both Somalia and the US have indicated their support for the CRC by signing it - a precursor to ratification.

## How are human rights protected by UN member states?

Human rights are protected in the first instance by treaties such as the CRC and the commitments to them that governments make. By signing a treaty, a country indicates its support for its provisions. The government normally then takes steps to prepare itself for implementing them. This could entail enacting new legislation or policies, or ensuring that existing laws and programmes are compatible with treaty obligations. Once a country has completed this work, it can ratify the treaty. This signals that it is committed to upholding the treaty's provisions and that it has agreed to be accountable to its own citizens where implementing them is concerned. Governments therefore need



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to ensure that people whose rights have been violated can seek advice and help, if necessary, via the courts.

### *How are human rights protected by the UN?*

There are times when states are unable or unwilling to guarantee the rights of their populations. If this occurs, the UN has a range of mechanisms to condemn those states and seek help for the victims. These mechanisms range from ‘naming and shaming’ countries by speaking out, to providing practical, on-the-ground assistance to people whose rights have been violated.

**Monitoring treaties:** When ratifying a UN human rights treaty, states agree that they are accountable to the international community as well as to their own citizens. Each treaty has a committee of independent experts that monitor its implementation. States must submit regular reports to these committees, usually every four or five years, upon which they are issued with recommendations on how to improve their performance. While there is no punishment for not submitting a report, committees can issue statements based on reports produced by other parts of the UN (e.g. the UN Human Rights Council or UN agencies) and by organisations such as UNA-UK. Some committees can consider individual cases as well as patterns of abuse.

**UN Human Rights Council:** The Council is the main UN forum for human rights. It monitors the human rights records of all UN member states and it has independent experts who work on specific issues and countries. It helps states to meet their human rights obligations through dialogue, capacity building, and technical assistance. It can also adopt resolutions condemning human rights abuses. In addition to its country-specific work, the Council makes

recommendations to the General Assembly on how to further develop international human rights laws and norms.

### *What about the gravest human rights abuses?*

The International Criminal Court (ICC) is an independent global court to which the UN can refer individuals accused of the most heinous crimes: genocide, crimes against humanity, ethnic cleansing and war crimes. In 2009, Sudanese President Omar Al-Bashir became the first sitting head of state to be charged. In 2011, the UN Security Council decided unanimously to refer to the ICC allegations of crimes against humanity committed by the Gaddafi regime in Libya. In 2012, the Court delivered its first verdict – Congolese warlord Thomas Lubanga was found guilty of recruiting and using child soldiers.

For more information, including PowerPoint presentations and factsheets on the UDHR and the CRC, see the Human Rights Teaching Pack produced by UNA-UK and UNESCO Associated Schools in 2008, available from [www.una.org.uk/learnabouthumanrights](http://www.una.org.uk/learnabouthumanrights)

### **10 DECEMBER – HUMAN RIGHTS DAY**

Human Rights Day marks the date on which the Universal Declaration of Human Right was adopted by the member states of the United Nations in 1948. 2008 saw the 60th anniversary of the UDHR, the world’s most famous expression of rights. For more information, see [www.una.org.uk/education](http://www.una.org.uk/education)

## Case study: Child labour in Haiti

The case study on student worksheet 4.4 has been included to give an example of a situation where poverty forces children into domestic work at a very young age. The activity encourages students to think about what rights children across the world are entitled to and what rights are denied to children in child labour situations.

Millions of children work to help their families in ways that are neither harmful nor exploitative. However, the International Labour Organization estimates that of the 215 million children worldwide engaged in child labour, over half work full time or in unsafe conditions. This can harm their mental and physical development, and interfere with their education. This case study focuses on a young boy who is a domestic worker in Haiti.

Situated in the Caribbean Ocean, Haiti makes up roughly half of the island of Hispaniola, which is next to Cuba. (The Dominican Republic makes up the other half.) On 12 January 2010, the country experienced a huge earthquake that killed 230,000 people and left over two million – nearly a quarter of Haiti’s population – homeless. The UN is still working hard to provide food, medicine and shelter for survivors, and to help rebuild the country.

Even before the earthquake, Haiti was one of the poorest countries in the world. According to the UN Development Programme, over three quarters of the population lived on less than \$2 a day between 2000 and 2007 (the most recent years for which there are data). Some 60% of Haitians were unemployed and half were illiterate. The country also had high levels of inequality, with the richest 10% of the population having a share of almost 50% of income. Today, more children go to school than before the earthquake, when nearly half were not enrolled in school. But high levels of child poverty, malnutrition and disease persist.

Poverty means that many parents cannot afford to look after their children. As a result, many poor parents give custody of their children to people who are better off, hoping that their children will be provided with food, clothing, shelter, education and healthcare in return for working as a domestic worker. As many as one in ten Haitian children are thought to be domestic workers. They can be as young as four years old when they are taken away from their families.

They work long hours, often with no pay, washing clothes, ironing, cooking, cleaning, looking after children, fetching

and carrying water from the well, burning household rubbish, emptying bedpans and running errands. They are not able to go to school and are not treated as part of the family. They are sometimes abused and can suffer from stunted growth, malnutrition, depression, anxiety and loss of self-esteem.

The UN Children’s Fund (UNICEF) is working to improve the lives of child labourers in Haiti. Psychosocial care and support for children in domestic service is a priority, helping them to regain self-esteem and to talk about their experiences. UNICEF also supports programmes that work with host families to improve the quality of life for child domestic workers, for example by making arrangements for them to receive education.

Sources: Anti-Slavery International ([www.antislavery.org](http://www.antislavery.org)) and UNDP 2009 Human Development Report ([www.undp.org](http://www.undp.org))

### GLOBAL CHILD LABOUR STATISTICS:

- There are an estimated 215 million child workers worldwide
- 115 million children are engaged in hazardous or damaging work
- About 60% of child labourers work in agriculture
- Only one in five working children gets paid. Most are unpaid family workers
- 90% of the children involved in domestic labour are girls
- Over the past decade, the absolute number of boys in work has risen

(Sources: ‘Facts on child labour’, International Labour Organization, 2010, and UNICEF State of the World’s Children 2011 report)

*Arthemise Jean, 12 years old, washes dishes at her 'host' family's home in Port-au-Prince, Haiti, in 2005. One of seven children from an extremely poor family, she lives with a distant relative she calls 'aunt' and works as a domestic labourer in the home. Thousands of children, some very young, have been handed over to 'host' families by desperately poor parents lured by the promise of a better life. But the children often receive no education and are forced to do hard, menial jobs. Many are forbidden to join the host family for meals, and sleep on concrete or dirt floors with little clothing. When they reach 15 (the age from which they should legally receive a wage), many are thrown out by their 'host' families and replaced by younger children. © Shaul Schwarz/Getty Images*



# Diplomacy in action: Model United Nations

*This lesson aims to give students a taste of diplomacy in action. By simulating a UN Security Council debate on the Olympic Truce, students will build their understanding of the UN's role in addressing conflict; learn about how sport can be used to further peace; and develop key skills such as public speaking, negotiation and conflict resolution.*

*The lesson is split into a 60-minute preparatory session, followed by the simulation itself, which can be run in 60 or 120 minutes, depending on the number of students. All the materials are included on the CD ROM.*

## What is Model United Nations?

Model United Nations is a simulation of the General Assembly, Security Council or another UN body. In Model UN, students step into the shoes of UN officials and ambassadors from member states to debate current issues on the UN's agenda. While playing their roles, students make speeches, prepare draft resolutions (the term used for a formal decision adopted by a UN body), negotiate with allies and adversaries and resolve conflicts – all in the interest of mobilising international cooperation to resolve problems that affect countries all over the world.

Before carrying out the Model UN simulation, students research the issue that will be discussed. Model UN participants learn how the international community acts on issues such as peace and security, human rights, the environment, food and hunger, economic development and globalisation. Model UN delegates also look closely at the needs, goals and foreign policies of the countries they represent at the event. The insights they gain from exploring the history, geography, culture and economy of their allocated country contribute to the authenticity of the simulation and guarantee a lively and memorable learning experience.

## What are the educational benefits of Model UN?

Model UN is a highly effective tool for teaching active citizenship. It engages young people in the study and discussion of global issues, and encourages the development of essential skills such as negotiation, research, writing, public speaking, problem solving, consensus building, conflict resolution, and compromise and cooperation. These skills are transferable across the curriculum and beyond.

Depending on the subject chosen for discussion, Model UN can be successfully implemented throughout the curriculum, notably in Citizenship, Geography, Humanities, Social Sciences and PSE.



### **What is the theme of this Model UN simulation?**

This two-part lesson will enable students to explore international peace, development and human rights issues, using the Olympic Truce concept as a starting point. During the ancient Olympic Games, a truce was introduced to allow participants safe passage to Athens. Hostilities ceased temporarily, arms and armies were not permitted to enter the territory. Capital punishment was also suspended for the duration of the Games.

In recent years, peace campaigners from around the world have sought to replicate the achievements of the ancient truce. In 1993, they persuaded the countries in the UN General Assembly to adopt a resolution calling on states to observe an Olympic truce. A similar resolution has been passed by the General Assembly before every Olympic & Paralympic Games. A worldwide truce, however, is yet to be achieved. This simulation challenges students to do better by trying to find ways in which to make the truce a reality. Teachers should refer to the student worksheets and lesson plans for more information.

### **What role will students play?**

Students will represent the ambassadors of 15 countries on the UN Security Council. After presenting their country’s views, they will work with others to produce a 5-point UN resolution on building a safer world. This will involve building partnerships with other countries, finding compromises and negotiating deals. Students will need to display tact and empathy, and be able to think on their feet.

Through their discussions, students will explore whether a truce is achievable (or even desirable) and whether it could be used to strengthen UN peacekeeping, peacebuilding and conflict prevention. They will also learn about how the Security Council functions and get a taste of international diplomacy in action.

### **Format of the session**

The enclosed CD ROM includes lesson plans with timings for the preparatory lesson and simulation itself. The simulation follows this broad format:

1. Short opening statements by each country that set out their positions on the issues being discussed
2. Class debate on the issues raised
3. Group work (small groups of 3) to produce a draft resolution
4. Presentation of draft resolutions to whole class
5. Voting on each resolution
6. Reflection time as a class

More information about voting and vetoes is included on page 21.

### **How should students prepare for a classroom Model UN?**

Students will learn about the Security Council and the Olympic Truce in their preparatory lesson (student worksheets 5.1 and 5.2). They should be allocated their countries by the teacher. They will then be asked to research their country for homework (country profiles are included on the CD ROM to help them), and prepare a short position paper on their country to use as their opening statement.

A good position paper will include:

- A brief introduction to the country being represented
- The country’s position on the topic
- Action taken by the government in relation to the topic
- Quotes taken from speeches made by government representatives
- Statistics on the issue
- The country’s recommendation for a resolution on this topic

Tips on how to put together a position paper are included on the CD ROM in a handout called ‘Student preparation tips’.

### **What is the role of the teacher?**

The teacher’s role is to chair the debate and teachers should consult the lesson plans for this two-part lesson before proceeding. The plans give further details and timings. There are formal Model UN rules of procedure (see [www.una.org.uk/mun](http://www.una.org.uk/mun)) but for classroom simulations, we recommend limiting the rules of procedure to a few simple guidelines on diplomatic behaviour. Here are some suggestions:

- Each country is represented by one or two pupils
- Countries are assigned by the teacher
- Students stay ‘in character’ throughout the simulation. This includes avoiding the first person singular (they should say ‘Brazil’s view is’ and ‘Brazil believes’ rather than ‘My view is’ and ‘I believe’)
- Students request permission to speak by raising their country placard (included on the CD ROM). They can only speak if recognised by the Chair.
- The Chair should set a speaking time limit but use his or her discretion when in session. We recommend setting a limit of one or two minutes for opening statements.
- There should be no talking when a delegate has been ‘given the floor’. This way everyone will get a chance to make their opinions heard.

After completing a classroom simulation, you could involve a whole year group by organising a day-long Model UN.

To view resources produced for a day-long Model Security Council simulation on the Olympic Truce, visit [www.una.org.uk/unitingthenations](http://www.una.org.uk/unitingthenations)

# Information on the UN Security Council

Resolutions on the Olympic Truce are normally discussed in the UN General Assembly. As the Assembly’s decisions are not binding on UN member states, we have set this simulation in the UN Security Council, which can issue binding decisions. This section includes information on the Council’s structure, powers and functions.

## What is the Security Council?

The Security Council is probably the most famous part of the UN. It is tasked with maintaining peace and addressing risks to global security, such as conflicts, international terrorism and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. The Council held its first session on 17 January 1946 in London. Since its first meeting, the Council, which exists in continuous session (i.e. meets all year round), has travelled widely, holding meetings in many cities, such

as Paris and Addis Ababa. For the most part, however, it operates from the UN headquarters in New York City.

## What powers does it have?

The Security Council has the power to consider any situation that it deems to be a threat to international peace and security. Any UN member state can bring a dispute to the Council’s attention. If a matter is brought before the Council, it can:

### Determine what is a threat to international peace and security

- The Council can investigate any situation (e.g. by sending monitors) to determine whether it is likely to endanger international peace and security



### Encourage the peaceful settlement of disputes

- The Council can call on parties to a dispute to seek a solution by peaceful means, including: negotiation, mediation or judicial settlement.
- It can authorise non-military measures, such as economic sanctions, travel and communications bans and the severance of diplomatic relations

### Take action on threats to peace, breaches of the peace and acts of aggression

- The Council can authorise the use of armed force in order to maintain international peace and security or uphold the right to self-defence. The particular arrangements (e.g. number of troops and who will provide them) are agreed by Council members in consultation with other relevant parties (e.g. the countries in the region affected)
- The Council can create peacekeeping missions, which must be accepted by the host country. The size, composition and mandate of a mission are normally discussed by Council members and those states that are contributing troops
- If the Council believes that one of the four worst crimes has been committed (genocide, crimes against humanity, war crimes or ethnic cleansing), it can refer individual perpetrators to the International Criminal Court (ICC)

### Membership of the Council

The Security Council comprises 15 UN member states. There are two categories of membership in the UN Security Council: five permanent members (known as the ‘P5’) and 10 non-permanent members, elected to serve two-year terms.

#### Permanent members:

The Council’s five permanent members represent the victorious powers after World War II: **China**, **France**, Soviet Union (later replaced by the **Russian Federation**), the **United Kingdom** and the **United States**. The five permanent members have veto powers, so in practice, any major decision of the Security Council must be acceptable to all five permanent members. This does not mean that the permanent members have to vote in favour of a decision; they can also abstain from voting.

#### Elected members:

Ten other members are elected by the General Assembly for two-year terms starting on 1st January, with five replaced each year. The UN divides its 193 members into five regional groups for election purposes: Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean, Eastern European, and Western European and Others (this group includes the United States).

Many countries feel that the five permanent members of the Security Council have too much power. They also question why, in 2012, these powers should rest with the victors of a war that took place over six decades ago.

Brazil, Germany, Japan and India have campaigned for years to become new permanent members in an expanded Security Council. Not surprisingly, other states in their regions (e.g. Argentina, Pakistan and Italy) are sceptical about this. The Africa group has also lobbied hard for an African permanent member, with Egypt, Nigeria and South Africa mentioned as potential contenders.

### Which countries will be represented in this simulation?

#### The fifteen countries selected for this lesson are:

- The five permanent members: China, France, Russia, the UK and the USA
- Three countries that have lobbied for permanent membership of the Council: Brazil, India and Japan
- Five countries interested in having more clout on the Council: Egypt, Nigeria, Pakistan, South Africa and Turkey
- One state that has never been elected to serve on the Council: Israel
- One state that is the subject of many Council resolutions: Iran

### Voting

Each member of the Council has one vote. Any major decision of the Council must secure an affirmative vote of **nine** members, ensuring that all permanent members either **vote in favour or abstain**. If one or more permanent members vote against a resolution, it will not pass, even if there are nine or more votes in favour.

THE UNITED NATIONS ... 193 COUNTRIES  
 TOGETHER FOR ... PEACE ... HUMAN RIGHTS  
 DEVELOPMENT ... GENDER EQUALITY ...  
 ENVIRONMENT ... **UNA-UK** ... CONNECT  
 THE UN ... **GENERATION UNITED NATIONS**  
 INTERNATIONAL CAREERS ... EXPANDED  
 ... **NETWORK** ... GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP AND  
 RESPONSIBILITY ... **HELP YOUR STUDENTS**  
 BUILD A BETTER CV ... CRITICAL SKILLS  
 SPEAKING ... NEGOTIATION ... GEOPOLITICAL  
 KNOWLEDGE ... INFORMED ATTITUDES  
**EXPERIENCE** DIPLOMACY IN ACTION ...  
**WORLD** ... FUTURE GLOBAL LEADERS ...  
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## Become a Generation United Nations school

*Joining Generation United Nations is the best way for your school to stimulate your pupils’ interest in international affairs and to explore their responsibilities as global citizens.*

*As the UK’s leading independent UN expert and host of the only national Model UN tournament, UNA-UK is in a unique position to help your pupils excel. We will put them at the heart of our Generation United Nations programme, giving them the chance to build key skills and demonstrate an active interest in global affairs – a valuable asset to their CV, no matter what career they choose.*

*Joining will provide you with teaching resources, events and opportunities for students and teachers, and access to the wider Generation United Nations network.*

*It’s simple to join. You just need to sponsor three or more pupils at £10 per student per year. Your pupils can also sign up independently – your school will automatically become a member when three or more sign up.*

### All Generation United Nations students will receive:

- New World magazine – the UK’s only publication devoted to the UN – four times a year
- Monthly e-newsletters with Model UN hints, network notices and career tips from UN big-hitters
- Priority booking for Model UN and other UNA-UK events
- Opportunities to compete in UNA-UK school competitions
- Access to our university members and branches for advice on what and where to study
- Regular campaign actions to help build a safer, fairer, sustainable world

### Generation United Nations schools will also receive:

- A ‘Member of Generation United Nations’ logo and web banner
- UNA-UK and UN teaching resources, like this one
- The opportunity to advertise their own news and events to the network
- All of the above student benefits for free for a selected teacher

*Joining is quick and easy – visit [www.una.org.uk](http://www.una.org.uk) or contact us on 020 7766 3456 or [membership@una.org.uk](mailto:membership@una.org.uk)*



# Useful links

## Lesson 1 - The UN: working for us all

United Nations  
[www.un.org](http://www.un.org)

The United Nations Education Website - Cyberschoolbus  
[www.cyberschoolbus.un.org](http://www.cyberschoolbus.un.org)

UNRIC - UN Regional Information Centre for Western Europe  
[www.unric.org](http://www.unric.org)

Everything you always wanted to know about the United Nations  
[www.un.org/geninfo/faq/Everything\\_You\\_Always\\_Wanted\\_to\\_Know\\_About\\_the\\_UN.pdf](http://www.un.org/geninfo/faq/Everything_You_Always_Wanted_to_Know_About_the_UN.pdf)

## Lesson 2 - The UN: keeping the peace

United Nations Peacekeeping  
[www.un.org/en/peacekeeping](http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping)

UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office  
[www.fco.gov.uk](http://www.fco.gov.uk)

UN Refugee Agency  
[www.unhcr.org](http://www.unhcr.org)

## Lesson 3 - The UN: fighting poverty

UN Millennium Development Goals  
[www.un.org/millenniumgoals](http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals)

UK Department for International Development  
[www.dfid.gov.uk](http://www.dfid.gov.uk)

UNESCO - UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization  
[www.unesco.org](http://www.unesco.org)

UNDP - UN Development Programme  
[www.undp.org](http://www.undp.org)

## Lesson 4 - The UN: protecting human rights

UNA-UK and UNESCO Associated Schools in the UK  
'Teaching about Human Rights' pack  
[www.una.org.uk/learnabouthumanrights](http://www.una.org.uk/learnabouthumanrights)

Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights  
[www.ohchr.org](http://www.ohchr.org)

UNICEF UK  
[www.unicef.org.uk](http://www.unicef.org.uk)

Anti-Slavery International UK  
[www.antislavery.org](http://www.antislavery.org)

## Lesson 5 - Diplomacy in action: Model United Nations

UNA-UK Olympic Truce MUN resources  
[www.una.org.uk/unitingthenations](http://www.una.org.uk/unitingthenations)

UNA-UK Model UN website  
[www.una.org.uk/mun](http://www.una.org.uk/mun)

UN Cyberschoolbus Model UN  
[www.un.org/cyberschoolbus/modelun/index.asp](http://www.un.org/cyberschoolbus/modelun/index.asp)

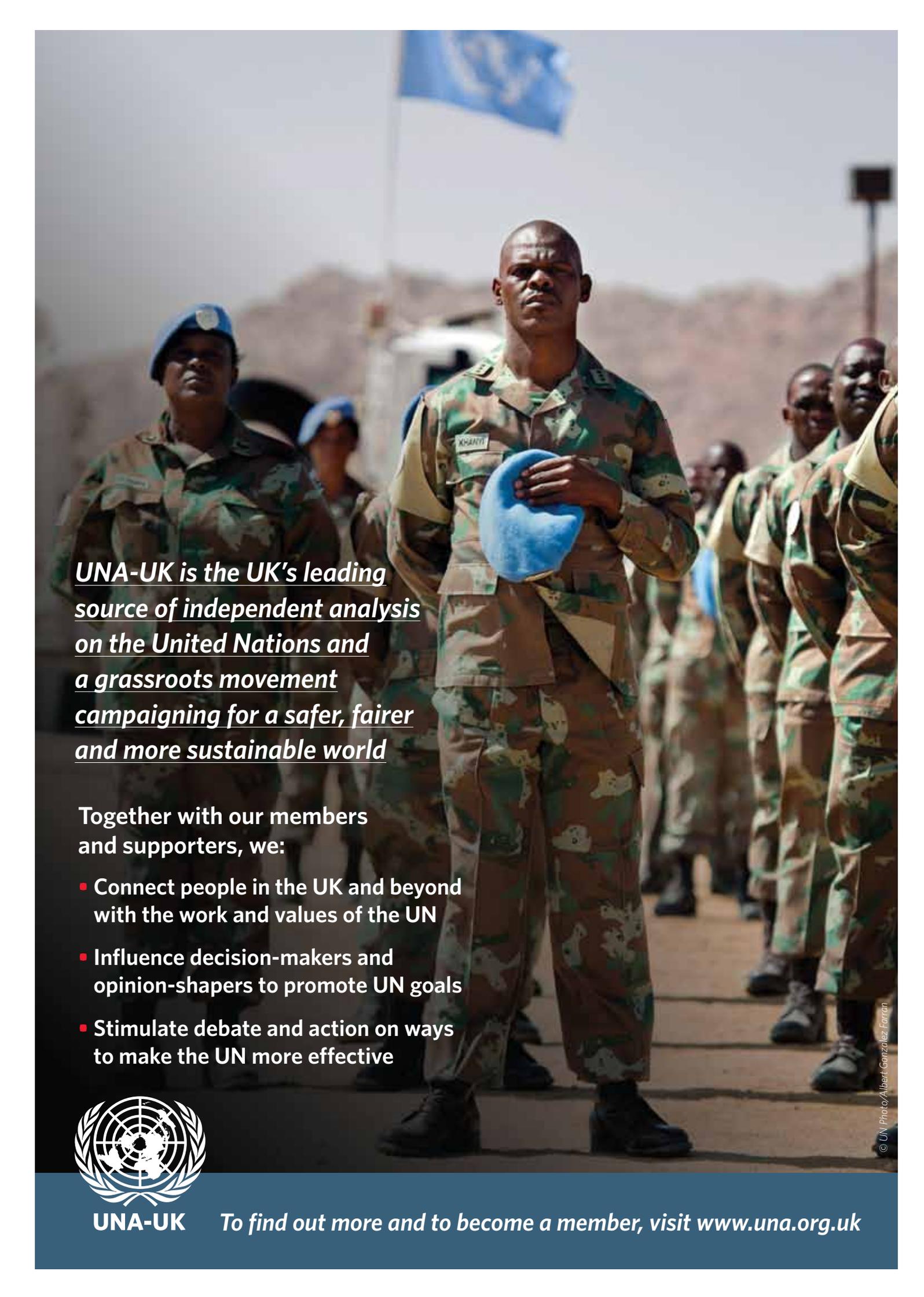
London 2010 Olympic Truce  
<http://getset.london2012.com/en/get-set-goes-global/get-set-for-the-olympic-truce>

Truce resolution submitted by the UK to the UN General Assembly in 2011  
[www.fco.gov.uk/en/global-issues/london-2012/olympic-truce](http://www.fco.gov.uk/en/global-issues/london-2012/olympic-truce)

International Olympic Truce Centre  
[www.olympictruce.org](http://www.olympictruce.org)

UN Sport for Development and Peace  
[www.un.org/wcm/content/site/sport](http://www.un.org/wcm/content/site/sport)

Why Model UN is great - a 15-year-old's perspective  
[www.una.org.uk/uniting-the-nations-resources](http://www.una.org.uk/uniting-the-nations-resources)



***UNA-UK is the UK's leading source of independent analysis on the United Nations and a grassroots movement campaigning for a safer, fairer and more sustainable world***

**Together with our members and supporters, we:**

- **Connect people in the UK and beyond with the work and values of the UN**
- **Influence decision-makers and opinion-shapers to promote UN goals**
- **Stimulate debate and action on ways to make the UN more effective**



**UNA-UK**

**To find out more and to become a member, visit [www.una.org.uk](http://www.una.org.uk)**

# List of electronic resources included on the enclosed CD ROM

## **General**

- An electronic version of the Teacher's Handbook
- Timed lesson plans for all lessons
- Glossary

## **Lesson 1 - The UN: working for us all**

- Student Worksheet 1.1
- Student Worksheet 1.2
- Student Worksheet 1.3
- Examples of UN achievements

## **Lesson 2 - The UN: keeping the peace**

- Student Worksheet 2.1
- Student Worksheet 2.2
- Student Worksheet 2.3
- Student Worksheet 2.4
- Student Worksheet 2.5

## **Lesson 3 - The UN: fighting poverty**

- Student Worksheet 3.1
- Student Worksheet 3.2
- Student Worksheet 3.3
- Student Worksheet 3.4
- UN Millennium Development Goals posters

## **Lesson 4 - The UN: promoting human rights**

- Student Worksheet 4.1
- Student Worksheet 4.2
- Student Worksheet 4.3
- Student Worksheet 4.4
- Student version of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights
- Official version of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights
- Student version of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child
- Official version of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child

## **Lesson 5 - Diplomacy in action: Model United Nations**

- Student Worksheet 5.1
- Student Worksheet 5.2
- Student Worksheet 5.3
- Student preparation tips
- 15 country profiles
- 15 country placards



## ***The United Nations Matters*** ***Working together to solve global problems***

This new exciting teaching pack offers an accessible and comprehensive introduction to the United Nations with the aim of developing students' understanding of the only global organisation tasked with tackling the biggest challenges facing the world, such as poverty, disease and war.

Using an interactive approach, students are asked to solve armed conflicts, find ways to secure children's rights, create a blueprint for peace, and develop an information campaign on poverty.

The pack covers the three main areas of the UN's work:

- Peace and security
- Poverty and sustainable development
- Human rights

It also includes a Model United Nations simulation, providing students with valuable insights into how the UN Security Council works and giving them the opportunity to take on the role of country ambassadors working together to find solutions to global challenges.

The pack encompasses five lessons with teacher's notes, lesson plans and student resources. It has been produced by the United Nations Association of the UK in collaboration with UNESCO Associated Schools UK and with generous funding from the UK Foreign & Commonwealth Office.



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