



UNITED NATIONS ASSOCIATION OF GREATER PHILADELPHIA

APRIL 2010

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UNA-GP ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

Wednesday June 23rd, 2010

4.30PM to 6.30PM

The Ethical Society, 1906 Rittenhouse Square

Keynote Address:

ANNE CRETER



Working at the United Nations for a Culture of Peace:

2010 marks the end of the UN declared International Decade for the Culture of Peace and Nonviolence for the Children of the World (2001-2010). How much progress has civil society made during this period? A goal now is for NGO's to connect with UNA's about the UN Declaration and Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace (A/RES/53/243). Of particular significance has been the global movement to create peace infrastructures (ie. ministries and departments of peace). UN Secretary-General Ban Ki Moon urges parliaments "to establish *institutional infrastructures* to support the development of necessary practical measures."

Anne Creter is United Nations NGO Representative for *Operation Peace Through Unity*. She co-chairs the CONGO *Committee on Spirituality, Values and Global Concerns* "Culture of Peace" Working Group and is UN liaison to the *Global Alliance for Ministries and Departments of Peace*.

Following the keynote address there will be reports from the treasurer and the president, after which the members will be asked to vote on the recommendations of the nominating committee. See page 2 about the committee.

Nominating Committee Seeks Input and Volunteers

A nominating committee of five has been formed, consisting of Anastasia Shown, Joanna Holsten, Mary Day Kent, Marlene Colbeck and David Eldridge. Anastasia Shown is coordinating. The committee is seeking candidates for the board and active volunteer members.

Please consider participating as a member of our board of directors. Our chapter board has twenty members. Approximately one-half is elected at the June Annual Meeting. There are currently vacancies and some members are rotating off the board. Since we function with minimal paid staff we need board members who can participate actively in facilitating chapter programs and maintaining the organization. If you would help us promote the goals of the United Nations in this way please email info@una-gp.org. A short written statement of your interests and your resume will facilitate the work of the Nominating Committee. We really look forward to hearing from you

.Donate a bit of money, donate a bit of time, gift the gift of membership to your friends and neighbors, and why stop there? Ask your boss to join. ONWARD.

Natural Disasters Demand a Radical New Response

The world's system of dealing with earthquakes and floods is outdated

From The Independent, UK, Monday, 29 March 2010

The number of natural disasters in the world has shot up over the past two decades. Scientists argue over the extent to which climate change is responsible for this phenomenon but no one can seriously deny such disasters are increasing in scale and frequency, nor that in tandem with a rapid rise in population and the growing concentration of people in cities, the number of people affected by disasters can also be expected to rise.

A gloomy thought, but one best tackled head on if the [consequences](#) are not to be gloomier still, which is why we should welcome the initiative launched today by the International Development minister, Gareth Thomas, on changing the way we respond to natural disasters.

Mr Thomas notes that we, primarily meaning wealthy Western nations, need to greatly increase the funds we make available to the UN's Central Emergency Response Fund, the Cerf, and at the same time chivy our prosperous neighbours, some of whom are paying almost nothing, into making a more proportionate contribution. We can take pride in the fact that so far [Britain](#) has been the largest single contributor to the fund, although we should bear in mind that countries with populations a fraction of the size of ours, such as Holland, Norway and Sweden, are not very far behind. [France](#), meanwhile, has given far less than its tiny neighbour Luxembourg, while America has given only slightly more than Belgium, though this lacklustre sum is due rise under the Obama administration.

The backdrop to Mr. Thomas's call is a recent **Oxfam** report which warns that the world needs to prepare itself for an almost two-fold rise in the number of people likely to be severely affected at any one time by natural disasters, from about 250 million today to roughly 375 million in about five years' time.

Succumbing to **compassion fatigue** – as well to growing doubts in some people's minds about the whole argument on climate change – many will dismiss this as another apocalyptic scare story that won't come true. This would be a mistake. As Oxfam's report rightly noted, the term natural disaster is going to have to be broadened in future to encompass not only the kind of quakes, flood and droughts with which we are familiar but also inevitable conflicts between growing populations over declining resources.

The recent carnage in central Nigeria – ostensibly between Christians and Muslims but also a battle for access to land of declining quality – is a disturbing portent of a thousand conflicts to come over

land and water. Our recent experience of disaster response and disaster management in [Haiti](#), meanwhile, should serve to remind everyone that rapid action and preventive action undertaken by global bodies like the Emergency Response Fund costs far less in the long term than uncoordinated and poorly targeted aid, or aid that trickles in late.

Mr. Thomas is right to point out that while money is crucial, improved co-ordination of global responses to disasters is equally important, which is why a UN summit to agree on a framework for collective action on the future of humanitarian support would be a good idea.

It all sounds a tall order, and hard to sell to the public at a time of relative economic hardship. But it is worth pointing out that overhauling and radically increasing the capacity of bodies like Cerf to meet the scale of tomorrow's disasters will cost a fraction of the money that we have spent on bailing out banks, and will undoubtedly save millions of lives.



Floods in Zimbabwe ruins prospects for good harvest

UNA-GP members, please walk to underscore the fact that hunger is a worldwide problem, including in our cities.

Legs Against Arms 5K Run/Walk/Roll!



Strengthen your legs & limbs as you oppose illegal handguns and support youth violence prevention in Philadelphia. Teams are invited to run in memory of loved ones lost to violence.

April 11, 2010
Saint Joseph's University
Race Starts at 8:30 am

www.legsagainstars.org

UNA-GP NEEDS A NEWSLETTER AND COMMUNICATION TEAM.

From Christiaan's desk:

Today is the Saturday before Easter; finally a moment to write a column for the newsletter. The last seven weeks were very busy, not in the least because of all the weather-related damage that needed to be cleaned up, but also at the UNA-GP. We found ourselves deliberating at the poorly attended special membership meeting about what to contribute to the UNA-USA request for input about the upcoming review of the USA by Human Rights Commission of the United Nations. Our one-page product can be found elsewhere in this newsletter. We worked with the other chapters in Pennsylvania to organize a visit to Senator Specter's office in Philadelphia. During that meeting with the senator's staff we (UNA-GP and Buck County reps) presented our arguments about USA support for the CEDAW, for a positive and bold approach to "clean" nuclear disarmament, the need to support the small arms treaty as well as the ban on landmines and cluster bombs and unconditional fulfillment of our financial obligations regarding the work of the UN system.

We went to the Embassy of Ghana to participate in an event of the Let's Go Africa Foundation. We rented a van and went to NY to UNA-USA's Membership Day. On the March 4th, several of us went to the CARE film event, "Half the Sky". Four days later we collaborated with

Remember Haiti ?



The UN has lost more of its staff in the Haitian earthquake than in any other single event during its history. Around the world, UN staff have paid tribute to those colleagues who died



The makeshift clinic at the MINUSTAH logistics base treated many children for their wounds and other injuries. Yet the work is far from over. PTSD, anomie, and sheer despair need to be addressed fast and for a long time to come

several others to celebrate International Women's Day. Our own Jessica Lee did a wonderful job and the collaboration was so fruitful that we intend to make this an annual event. Meanwhile our library project became more and more a school project and we had several events in the first three months of this year, including a presentation at the FWWIC. Students like Marcia, Haven and Elias did great work. Elsewhere you will find a short text by Marietta Tanner.

Contacts have been made with the OXFAM volunteer team and through the energetic collaboration with Sandrina Da Cruz we were able to participate at an event at the Institute for Natural Sciences on "Global Warming and the Disproportionate Effect on Women". A week earlier several UNA-GP members walked in the walkathon "Walk for Water ,Walk for life", a kick-off for World Water Week.

On March 29, I delivered a short keynote address at the 2010 Pennsylvania Statewide Ceremony of the Congressional Award, where I emphasized the need to understand the link be-



EARTH DAY 2010:
40 years of
celebrating and worrying
about our Planet
Join us for an afternoon of
dialogue and networking
on April 24th from 1-4.30
at the FWWIC.
Learn about the **Earth Charter**
and sip a glass of wine while pondering
local **ACTION**
www.earthcharter.us.org

tween global citizenship and global volunteering.

The UNA-GP has been able to get a few interns interested to do work over the summer. We also have been lucky to get accepted as a co-op employer in the Drexel System. Much work will be geared towards getting good descriptions and links to organizations that are members of the COO of the UNA-USA; this work can be integrated with work necessary for the Global Philadelphia Association.

Talking about Drexel, Marco Salerno and Elias Okwara have

been able to get a UNA student Alliance Drexel Chapter started. Congratulations!! Their first event will be on May 4th. See elsewhere about that event.

I probably have forgotten several items. One of them is the unexpected change in leadership at the UNA-USA. Tom Miller left as of the March 15th and Edward Elmendorf has been appointed as the new President. No comment from me on this development, as I have no clue what transpired.

Christiaan

On the nuclear arms deal between Washington and Moscow: From a comment by Dallas Darling

(darling@wn.com)

Negative-oriented material progress had once again defeated a positive moral promise. Actually, un-kept promises are like lies. Even more so, maybe they are lies. When a nation pursues only materialism

at the expense of moral principles, like promises that will improve and better humanity, it borders on falsely believing it is above ethical and universal laws that govern life. In other words, nations that do not fulfill

their promises to improve humanity become unaccountable and reckless. By believing only in materialistic progress and superiority, nations, like the U.S., rewrite ethics and often believe they are above the rule

of morality.

Perhaps this explains why the U.S. imagined the annihilation of humanity with the Massive Retaliation and Mutually Assured Doctrines, and why it continues to fight imperial wars of aggression around the world. In the study of ethics, keeping a promise is considered a sign of good character. Although some promises can give rise to moral conflicts, for nations to devote their entire heart and mind to

find the way by which the miraculous inventiveness of man shall be consecrated to his life will surely lead to universal peace.

Cutting deployed long-range nuclear warheads by one-third is not enough, as President Barack Obama and President Dmitry Medvedev have recently agreed to do. This still leaves several thousand that can be utilized for the purpose of destroying humankind. The

most comprehensive arms reduction treaty would be the complete elimination of nuclear and biological and chemical weapons. Will the Nuclear Curtain, that has descended from Washington to Moscow, ever be lifted? Let us hope that courage and moral progress, or keeping a promise, triumphs over cowardice and negative material progress.

Talking about the United Nations to Muffled Ears

Marietta J. Tanner

With news about war and mayhem everywhere, and its presence being cited in most of these disputes, one would think that interest should be high in the United Nations, which after all came into being to assuage the scourge of war. Not so. President Obama has begun to pay our dues, but from the populous there has not been a groundswell of support. Even liberal adults and groups, who are knowledgeable and concerned with global issues, have developed loyalties and connections to other or specialty agencies during the years when the United Nations as a whole was being trashed as a do-nothing institution.

Our youth reflect this neglect. The students whom we meet in communities around Philadelphia – whether they live in the inner-city or in suburban neighborhoods know little about the United Nations and the UN System. Most cannot tell you where it is, and few have any idea of its mission.

That is why, even though we were not able to make the connection with the Free Library this year and get a large number of libraries to buy into the project, I am still heartened by what we are accomplishing. We have a dedicated cadre of college students who will go anywhere to speak to small groups of teenagers about the UN and the world water crises. The teens acknowledge that water shortages are real, and by the end of the session can relate it to their own lives. The task is to get them to understand that solutions to water problems and so much more are being facilitated by the United Nations. We perceive the United Nations as just being *there* and so the UN requires nothing from the rest of us. Notice how the press marginalized the UN (by now the largest employer in Haiti) when reporting on the earthquake in Haiti. If it was mentioned at all it was usually with criti-

cism for not having more tents or not supplying food quickly enough to victims. There was little notice that United Nations' humanitarian personnel was already on the scene, and several perished in the quake.

United States citizens seem to take democracy for granted, so it is not out of character that they should behave this way toward the United Nations. Huge numbers don't vote and they don't connect their good living conditions with the positive role that government can play, a role out of necessity paid for by taxes. The years of tax revenue through war, piracy and plunder are long gone. With this mindset, getting through ears muffled by an entitlement sensibility will require more than an hour long session with students. For our project, repeated visits and follow ups, even a permanent presence, are necessary. At Strawberry Mansion High School there is

The Coalition for Peace Action is co-sponsoring a Peace Train to New York City

<http://bit.ly/d1F6yQ>

for a major international Rally, March, and Festival on the eve of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference at the UN.

Join people from throughout the Region and the World to call for real progress toward the Global Nuclear Disarmament through negotiating verifiable agreement(s), as called for in the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). The Nuclear Age is nearly 65 years old, and it's time to globally retire nuclear weapons, so they can't be used by terrorists, nations or anyone else!

**May 2, 2010
2PM
New York City**

Schedule:

Philadelphia (boarding Septa R-7 Trenton Local, to Trenton Station)--
10:47 AM Market East

10:52 AM Suburban Station

10:56 AM 30th Street Station

11:45 AM Arrive Trenton, change to NJ Transit.

Trenton 11:45-12:20 Pre-Boarding Rally

12:31 PM Trenton Boarding of NJ Transit Train to NYC

12:27 PM Princeton (Shuttle to Princeton Junction)

12:44 PM Princeton Junction

12:59 PM New Brunswick

1:55 PM Arrive Penn Station

New York and walk together to 2:00 PM Rally nearby.

a dedicated librarian and at Andorra Library we find a really concerned adult. Both want their kids to be stimulated to research and feel engaged on the global issues. Sophisticated girl scouts in Ardmore were shocked that they had heard so little and knew so little about an institution that does so much. Indeed, miniscule awakenings about the importance of the UN, but it is with small seeds that all trees grow, including the trees of knowledge.

An Email from one of our colleagues up north.

Are you aware of the Institute for Domestic and International Affairs, which produces a Philadelphia Model UN, Rutgers Model UN and develops materials? <http://www.idia.net/>

I've just seen in the past week that Model UN is being cablecast on the Madison Square Garden Varsity Channel but haven't had a chance to watch it yet. MSGV mainly cablecasts high school varsity games and a quiz show called Challenge from the NY/NJ/Conn area.

'Model UN' the product of a partnership between IDIA and MSG Varsity will air at 8PM on Sunday March 14. The half-hour show will highlight the Model United Nations experience of students that attended **IDIA's Philadelphia Model United Nations conference** just a few weeks ago. The series will continue with two additional shows - a half hour program on March 21, and the hour-long finale on Sunday March 28 -- all at 8PM.

"For years, the Model UN experience has been limited to teachers, and those students that have had the opportunity to attend a conference," said IDIA Executive Director Michael Hinchliffe. "We are excited to work with MSG Varsity to make the Model United Nations experience available to the entire region -- students, parents, and teachers. Those who have participated know how important Model UN is in the development of today's high school students, and after this series, *everyone* will have the opportunity to understand just how important these programs are."

'Model UN' represents an ongoing partnership with MSG Varsity, as efforts have already begun for a sister series 'Model Congress', which will focus on Rutgers Model Congress, being held from April 15-18, 2010 in New Brunswick, New Jersey.

Great publicity / education for this to be on TV. It would be great if UNA could get involved.

Cheers,
Jeanne Betsock Stillman
President, UNA Southern NY State Division

It seems to me that we need to make a bit more noise about the things we do here in Philadelphia. Anyone? christiaan



I want to extend a personal invitation to you to join me at CARE's 2010 National Conference & Celebration: Many Voices, One Movement on May 11 and 12 in Washington D.C. When you join us at this year's advocacy conference, CARE's largest one yet, you'll play a vital role in the movement dedicated to improving the lives of the world's poorest individuals. The conference will leave you informed, empowered and even more committed to advocating on behalf of the 1.4 billion men, women and children struggling to survive on just over a dollar a day.

For more information about the National Conference & Celebration and to register visit:

www.careconference.org.

It takes entire communities, loyal supporters and passionate advocates to help build a world in which all people have a chance to experience real life-changing empowerment. Please join me in supporting CARE's mission to build a better future for people across the globe.

I hope to see you in Washington ,

Helene

Helene D. Gayle, MD, MPH
President and CEO, CARE

ANY IDEAS ABOUT FUNDRAISING FOR UNA-GP? SHOOT US AN EMAIL, DROP A LINE, GIVE US A CALL.

Pic of the Day



Fun at our Library Project at FWWIC

DOES IRAN HAVE NUCLEAR CAPABILITIES? WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF IRAN OBTAINS NUCLEAR BOMBS?

*Please join the Drexel Student Alliance of United Nations Association
hosting a diverse panel of experts discussing the current Iranian nuclear issue.*

For more information please contact dsa.una@drexel.edu



Embracing Insightful Dialogue and Thoughtful Analysis

From **Drexel Student Alliance**

We have secured a good panel for our first great event, tentatively Tuesday, May 4th, that will focus on the nuclear programs in Iran and what the global response should be.

The list includes:

Jim Walsh –expert in international security and a research associate at MIT’s Security Studies Program (SSP). He’s testified before Senate committees and subcommittees.

http://web.mit.edu/ssp/people/walsh/faculty_walsh.html

<http://web.mit.edu/ssp/people/walsh/Walsh%20CV2010.pdf>

Geneive Abdo – author, fellow and Iran analyst at the Century Foundation, prior to which she was a liaison for the United Nations’ Alliance of Civilizations project created to improve relations between Western and Islamic societies.

<http://www.tcf.org/about.asp?pgid=staff&staffid=58>

<http://www.geneiveabdo.com/>

Ivanka Barzashka – research assistant in the Strategic Security Program of the Federation of American Scientists.

<http://www.fas.org/press/experts/barzashka.html>

Please note that we are waiting to hear back from Event Services to secure a venue and time.

The UNA-USA 2010 Annual Meeting
Opportunities, Advocacy, and the Way Ahead

June 6 - 8, 2010

Carnegie Endowment for International Peace

1779 Massachusetts Ave. NW Washington, DC 20036-2103

UNA-USA is pleased to announce the 2010 Meeting of the Council of Chapters and Divisions! This year's theme is *Opportunities, Advocacy, and the Way Ahead*. As our best opportunity to meet, learn, and strategize, we hope you can join us!

This conference provides an opportunity for grassroots leaders from around the country to get together and discuss issues relating to the UN and to determine how we can help.

We will hear from many of our own activists and leaders as well as from many policy experts who will share their insights on US policy and UN activities.

Also featured in this year's meeting is the important ["Day on the Hill,"](#) which is a not-to-be-missed opportunity for activists to demonstrate to members of Congress, through face-to-face meetings, the strong public support that exists for active US participation in the United Nations*.

Early Bird Registration is now open and will expire on May 6th, so register now before prices increase by 20 percent.

Accommodations are being provided by the [Hotel Palomar](#) at 2121 P Street, Washington DC, 20037 for a discounted \$179 plus tax per night. To make reservations, please call 1-877-866-3070 and make sure you mention the United Nations Association in order to receive the discount rate!

[Click here to view a tentative schedule!](#)

[Click here to learn more about UNA-USA's Annual Meetings!](#)

** PLEASE NOTE: Participants will be asked to schedule their own House meetings for the Day on Capitol Hill (UNA staff will arrange all Senate meetings). Please wait to hear from us before requesting a meeting with your House office.*