



UNITED NATIONS ASSOCIATION

of Greater Philadelphia

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Dear members and friends of UNA-GP,

The striking centennial of 1914, the year in which “the war to end all wars” began, should give us all an opportunity to study the causes of this first major catastrophic war of the 20th century. For those of us particularly dedicated to the success of the United Nations, we are challenged and haunted by the rise and fall of the League of Nations, the UN's predecessor founded at the end of World War

I. It is generally considered that the crucial flaw of the League of Nations was the refusal of the United States congress to support it, and thus the absence of the nation that had done so much to push its creation. If you ever have the chance to go to Geneva, Switzerland, you can walk among the grand buildings of the League of Nations, now used by the UN, and see the physical remains of the earlier dream. I hope that this anniversary and its implications will encourage us to be at our most active this year and recognize the value of our

messages to Congress and our fellow citizens. The phrase “make a difference” has become worn and casual, but there are times when our work really needs to do that!

As we head into this year we have a full calendar of events, many listed throughout this newsletter. In all my messages I remind us of the importance of joining the UN Association, or renewing our memberships. One immediate incentive to do that is the UN Association Members Day at the UN Headquarters in New York, coming up soon on February 7th. This is a free event for UNA members only! We will be organizing a group from Philadelphia, so please be sure your membership is up to date and join us.

We also enter the new year with hope in several negotiations underway to resolve or at least ameliorate long-standing conflicts

in different parts of the world. There are negotiations with Iran over sanctions and nuclear policy, with Syria over refugees, chemical warfare, human rights and humanitarian relief, with Cuba and the US over immigration, drugs, the embargo, and prisoners. Colombia and the FARC guerrillas are negotiating over ending the 40 year civil war. The Palestine Authority and Israel with intense involvement by Secretary of State John Kerry are meeting to seek some forward steps toward peace, all fragile processes that need support in order not to relapse into continued violence.

With all hopes for a year of peace,

Mary Day

**Mary Day Kent,
President, UNA-GP**

A few words from the Executive Director

From Christiaan's Desk



This morning I am reading, with pleasure, the news that “Iran and six world powers took a significant and hard-won step toward a nuclear agreement”. Also, over the weekend president Obama re-iterated his plans to veto an ill-conceived bill S 1881 that is sponsored by Senator Menendez, and co-sponsored, alas, by our senators Casey and Toomey; a bill that would bestow more sanctions on Iran “because sanctions have been successful in bringing Iran to the table”. It is simply a bad

bill. To use a comparison, once a patient is in surgery, don't try to tell the surgeons that the patient needs more prep work, or that they should use bigger knives, or that you have opinions about how they should do their work.

The UNA-GP has been part of efforts by like-minded groups to try to convince our senators that such a bill during negotiations shows mal-intent and disrespect for Iran as well as our allies. During these negotiations, we should tone down our rhetoric. For example, calling Iranians “cheats” as Senator Toomey did in his weekly newsletter is not helpful at all. On that note, we are a kettle ourselves. The USA has a long reputation of cheating, if not outright bullying, dissing even our own allies if and when we feel like it.

Our board had a productive semi-retreat meeting on Saturday, the 11th. Many good things were discussed and a tentative plan for presenting and promoting the UN and the UN System within our region was adopted. Molly Roth had been invited to help us with the

discussion and she did a good job with staying in the realm of the volunteer dynamics that shape our organization. Pictures were taken and there will be a few in this newsletter. Kudos to Manisha Patel, who provided delicious homemade cakes and made me forget my self-discipline. Elsewhere in the newsletter you will find an overview of activities planned for 2014. A year that has started with a reminder of our global warming problems, with a clear warning that you shouldn't mess with bridge traffic, and that will see, at least in the USA, an overheated, super-expensive, policy-poor political circus. A circus that will again illustrate the severe stranglehold that two parties have on the structural and cultural political will of We, The People. Let's get to work nevertheless, there is always the next generation to focus our hope on.

Christiaan, Executive Director

The UNA-GP is a chapter of the United Nations Association of the United States of America (UNA-USA). Our website offers information about our mission, upcoming events, and ways to get involved, including joining and volunteering. In addition, we are on social media sites and send out our monthly newsletter. Take a look around!

Volunteers with all types of skill sets are welcome to work with the UNA-GP, in the short or long term. If interested, please contact:

Manisha Patel
Volunteer Coordinator
Board Member
mpatel@una-gp.org

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Commission on the Status of Women (CSW58)



The fifty-eighth session of the Commission on the Status of Women will take place at United Nations Headquarters in New York from 10 - 21 March 2014. Representatives of Member States, UN entities, and ECOSOC-accredited non-governmental organizations (NGOs) from all regions of the world attend the session.

Themes

Priority theme:

Challenges and achievements in the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals for women and girls

Review theme:

Access and participation of women and girls to education, training, science and technology, including for the promotion of women's equal access to full employment and decent work (agreed conclusions from the fifty-fifth session)

Mon Mar 10th to Fri Mar 21st

To read more visit [Here](#)



Doing Good by Doing Well: Private Sector Gets Behind UN Disabilities Treaty

The UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) is widely regarded as the keystone international framework for protecting the human rights of an estimated one billion persons with disabilities around the world. While many have called for the U.S. Senate to ratify the convention based on its straightforward human rights stipulations, a powerful complementary narrative has materialized that links the treaty with boosting technological innovation, enhancing global market competition and expanding space for job growth. Modeled largely after the 1990 Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), the convention has been ratified by 139 UN members. Within the U.S., which is home to an estimated 58 million Americans with disabilities, a burgeoning bipartisan coalition of human rights activists, disability rights groups, veteran's affairs organizations, and the private sector is calling for swift U.S. ratification of the convention.

To read more visit [Here](#)



For more information on the UN Nations Foundation and how to help visit [Here](#)



On December 3, the International Day of Persons with Disabilities, an event was held at UN Headquarters for the inauguration of an Accessibility Center, which will enable greater participation of persons with disabilities in the intergovernmental processes at the world body. A pile of pins with the logo of the new Accessibility Center. (UN Photo/Amanda Voisard)

From Carol Jenkins:

To all members of UNA-GP
The nominating committee of the UNA-GP board is accepting and reviewing nominations for new members to the 2014-2015 board, and would like to welcome any names (including your own) of members who can serve in that capacity for a two year period. The names and contact information should be sent to president@una-gp.org. The deadline for submissions is May 15, 2014, and elections will be held during the Annual Membership Meeting on June 19.

UNA-GP Activities

(mostly tentative) for 2014, other events are being planned and will be added case by case.

Activity/Event	Date	Day	Time	Location/info
Model UN on Water Management	Jan 20	Monday	8.30A-2P	Abington Senior High School
Membership Day at the UN	Feb 7	Friday	All day	Please register via www.unausa.org
Model UN Rule of Law	March 1	Saturday	8.30A-3P	UPenn Campus
Women, War and Peace	March 5	Wednesday	6.00-8.00PM	I-House. In celebration of International Women's Day (March 8)
Walk for Water	March 22	Saturday	All Morning	West River Drive. Organized by Keiyo Soy Ministries
PGWI annual Conference	April 10	Thursday	All Day	Drexel U. topic: Water Justice is Urban/ peri-urban settings.
Planting a (Fruit) Tree (Earth Day)	April 22	Tuesday	All Morning	TBD. Final activity of Youth Building Roots program 2013-14.
UNA-GP Board Meeting	April 26	Saturday	10A-Noon	TBD. All members welcome to attend
International Red Cross/ for Red Crescent Day	May 8	Thursday	6.00-8.00PM	TBD. Working topic: Health Services Children lost in Conflicts. Raising funds for UNICEF UNAUSA Annual Membership
Meeting	June 7,8,9	Saturday-Monday	All day	TBD. In Wash DC.
UNA-GP Annual Membership Meeting	June 19	Thursday	6.00-8.00P	Tbd. Please note that this meeting is on the eve of World Refugee Day.
Annual Garden Party	July 13	Sunday	4.00-9.00P	146 Pelham Rd. Our Fundraising event and commemoration of World Day for International Justice (July 17)
UNA-GP Board meeting	Aug. 21	Thursday	5.30-7.00P	Tbd. All members welcome to attend
P3 Soccer Tournament	Sept. 21	Sunday	All Day	UPenn Adams Field. Soccer and family peace festival in honor of International Day of Peace
Peace Day Events	Sept 21	Sunday	All Day	See www.PeaceDayPhilly.org
Our Diets, Our Planet;	Oct 16	Thursday	6.00-8.00P	Tbd. World Food Day. Kick-off of our Youth Building Roots 2014-15 program
Our Faiths and the United Nations	Oct 24	Friday	All Day	UN Day (69th anniversary) A flurry of activities aiming at the faith based communities, to strategically embrace the work of the United Nations System
UNA-GP Board Meeting	Nov 15	Saturday	10A-Noon	Tbd. All members welcome to attend
Celebrating the legacy of Eleanor Roosevelt	Dec 10	Wednesday	6.00-8.30P	UDHR Day. Topic and venue tbd.

Transforming the United Nations System: Designs for a Workable World

February 23 2014 3.00PM

Lecture by

Dr. Joseph Schwartzberg

Author and activist

UNA of Minnesota

World Federalist

Fairmount Water Works Interpretive Center

(Behind the Art Museum)

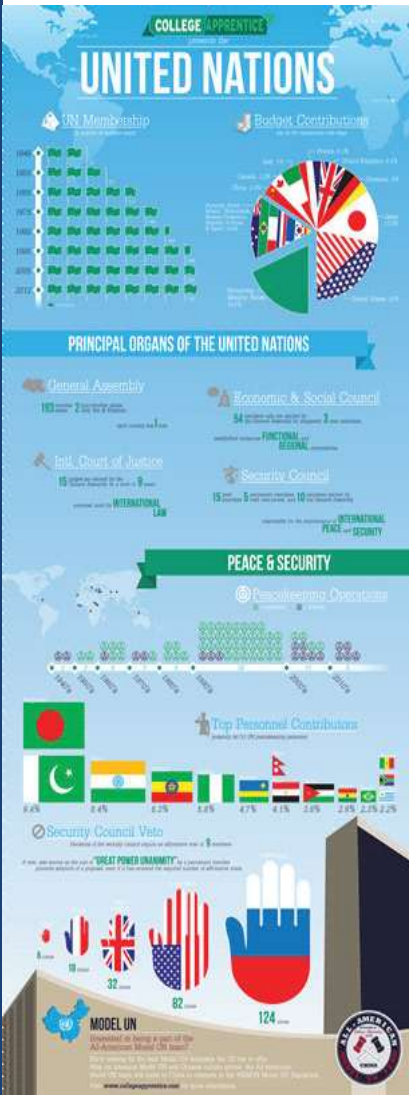
640 Water Works Drive

Reception to follow

This is a free event, organized by the
UNA-GP

Open to the general public

RSVP to info@una-gp.org or text 267-252-1199



J. Schwartzberg: Transforming the United Nations System: Designs for a Workable World, Tokyo: United Nations University Press, 2013.

Lobbying Senators Casey and Toomey to withdraw their support for S.1881

Together with other peace promoting groups in Philadelphia, Mary Day Kent and Christiaan Morssink went to the offices of Senators Casey and Toomey to plead withdrawing their support for the proposed bill that seeks to increase sanctions on Iran, WHILE NEGOTIATIONS ARE ONGOING. We deplore this unwise bill full with blatantly bad language that, in our opinion, cannot even withstand constitutional scrutiny. The issue brief from the ACA below captures the essence of our arguments.

ACA | Arms Control Association

ISSUE BRIEF

Analysis of the Challenges Posed by the World's Most Dangerous Weapons

Volume 5, Issue 1, January 8, 2014

Congress Should Not Sabotage Iran Nuclear Deal with Additional Sanctions

The "Iran Nuclear Weapon Free Act" (S. 1881), introduced in the Senate on December 19 by Sens. Menendez (D-N.J.) and Kirk (R-Ill.), threatens to derail the breakthrough agreement that Iran and the P5+1 reached in Geneva on November 24 that will pause Iran's most worrisome nuclear activities in exchange for limited and reversible sanctions relief.

To read more visit: [Here](#)

Update from our Virtual Office and Dream Team:

All the work of the UNA-GP is done by volunteers, members, and students. Our board members take on tasks and are involved in events. Some members contribute on topics of their interest. However, much of the work around education and raising awareness is provided by a group of young people, ever changing, who blend their interest for the United Nations with their academic pursuits. The UNA-GP cannot function without their input and their perceptions as almost post-millennials.

Yesterday, January 24, we had our first meeting of the interns, volunteers, coop students and work-study students. In the coming months, these young people will lend their support for the different events, projects and programs we undertake and plan. In no particular order, the team members, where appropriate with their main input, are in no particular order:

Minsoo Kim, UPENN, work study: Leadership and MUNRoL

Caroline Di Stefano, Volunteer, VillaNova, Campus rep.

Rafiat Kasumu, UPenn, work study,

Daniel Bu, UPenn, workstudy, MUN RoL Convener

Stephanie McAndrew, Volunteer, Temple MUN RoL

Marta Sydoryak, Volunteer, Temple Campus Rep

Sandra Zarichny, Intern, La Salle,

Jesse Ferrante, Coop, Drexel: Newsletter

Arame Niang, UPenn, work study, Coordinator YBR

Arushi Kohli, Volunteer, Drexel

Kellie Widener, Volunteer, Drexel, Design and newsletter

Charlotte Benham, UPenn, work study; education planner

David Sherwin, Volunteer, professional; grant writing

Zoriana Strockyj, Intern, Temple

You can help the United Nations Association out!

Have any ideas for fundraising events? We're all ears!

With the volume of projects the UNA-GP is constantly immersed in, we are always in need of more volunteers, no matter how much or how (seemingly!) little time you have to devote. Email Manisha Patel, (Volunteer Coordinator and Board Member) with your suggestions or any questions at

The UNA-GP is in need of funds for upcoming projects. In order to continue with extremely beneficial and enriching events, such as the Model UN, we need your help! Please donate whatever you can to the UNA-GP, and in turn, Philadelphians and beyond!



Goodbye 2013

Welcome 2014

