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Dear members and friends of UNA-GP,

I am sure that all of us who care about peace and human rights have been riveted to the reporting on CIA torture of captives and imprisoned suspects in the first decade of the 21st century. Although I am appalled by the documented “techniques” of inhuman brutality, I wish I were more surprised. In 1976 I was a student at Georgetown University in Washington, DC and I spent my spare time translating for Amnesty International the letters and testimonies of prisoners tortured by the juntas in South America (Argentina, Chile, Uruguay, Brazil). In those cases however, the US was involved indirectly--supplying weapons, equipment, training and sometimes advisors—and that involvement brought popular and congressional outrage. We have a whole apparatus of human rights evaluation that applies to our foreign aid growing out of that ’70s outrage but none of that applies to the use of torture directly by our own government. To read the details of what human beings can do to other human beings is heartbreaking: to read today that our CIA and highly paid contractors have been doing in the 2000’s what many of us thought we had ended in the 1970s is infuriating. I think we should all be grateful to Senator Feinstein for the courage to release this report and we should all be working for this to lead to a new and serious commitment to human rights and our international obligations such as the Convention on Torture and the Geneva Conventions, to say nothing of honor and decency.

When I came to the UN Association of Greater Philadelphia, one of the people who inspired me to join was Peg Lippincott, a board member and leader for many years. Sadly she died in November and we will miss her. Board member Marietta Tanner has written a more detailed remembrance of Peg to be published on our website.

The coming year, 2015, the 70th year of the United Nations, will be filled with exciting events and challenging issues. The calendar is already filling up but there are still opportunities to organize additional events or work on the commitments we have underway. If you are one of the many who support the United Nations but have never visited the Headquarters in New York, I strongly encourage you to join us at the UNA Member’s Day, February 20th. It is always a privilege and a gateway to the world to be there in the heart of the international community.

With all best wishes for holidays of light and joy,

Mary Day

Mary Day Kent, President, UNA-GP
From Christiaan’s Desk.

Goodbye 2014!! It has been a year that made me wonder whether humanity is turning the clock back. Instead of me ranting and reflecting on all that was bad, or raving about the few springs of hope that were good, let me just say that in tackling all that is unjust, all that is discriminatory, all that is making the quality of life a negative, let’s keep as a working guide the acknowledgement that we all ARE, warts and all.

Happy Holidays,

Christiaan Morssink

P.S. Two great news items in one week: Cuba and the US are talking, and Congress passed the Water for the World Act with strong bipartisan support! Now that’s worthwhile of a toast with eggnog.
UNA-GP’s newly formed Membership Committee has been meeting regularly with a mission of mobilizing the community in becoming more involved in the local chapter. Membership support helps in bringing programming for the local community, its schools and university students. Some of the other objectives of the committee are to keep its members more connected to world issues through participation in Chapter events as well as get them involved in UNA-USA/UN programs and grow local support for the ideals and work of the UN in Philadelphia’s community.

Manisha Patel
mpatel@una-gp.org

A Few Words From Our Volunteer Coordinator

Manisha Patel

Global Water Alliance Update

As you may know, the UNA-GP continues to work closely with the Philadelphia Global Water Alliance, which includes our active participation in their annual conference as well as assistance in their yearly high school education initiatives.

On page 12 you will find the flyer for the 8th Annual Global Water Alliance conference in 2015, taking place on Thursday, March 26th, on the topic of Best Practices in WASH; tentative location, The Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania.

We, along with our friends at GWA and AKA, are organizing a Model UN on Water Management. Materials have been directed to GWA and we are advising the student volunteers at that NGO about how to implement the MUN on Water Management, to be held on MLK Day, January 19th, as a service learning project for students from 8 schools.

Please be aware that several people from GWA will attempt to go to the World Water Forum in Korea!

The World Energy Council (WEC) and World Water Council (WWC) have announced that they have joined forces to bring the issue of the water-energy nexus to the fore in the run up to the 7th World Water Forum, to be staged in Daegu, Korea from 12 to 17 April 2015.

UNA-GP will be working closely with GWA to ensure that Philadelphia has a strong presence at the WEC in 2015.
International Women’s Day 2015: Global Migrant Rights & Justice

Join us for performances, refreshments and discussion celebrating local and global initiatives advocating for the rights of migrant women and their families. Speakers will explore the intersection of immigrant rights, women’s rights & children’s rights and the impact of immigration policies and enforcement in the U.S. and abroad.

March 4th 6:00-8:00
International House, 3701 Chestnut St. South America Room

This is a One Book, One Philadelphia community program and encourages reading and discussion around a single book. This year’s selection, *Orphan Train* by Christina Baker Kline, explores children’s courage & adaptability and the power of family.

So far this event is co-sponsored by Penn’s South Asia Center, Middle East Center, Center for East Asian Studies, Africa Center, Graduate Center & Family Resource Center, International House and Global Philadelphia Association.

Contact: anastasia.shown@gmail.com

Rule of Law Update

We are officially counting down to our third annual Rule of Law Conference! Each year, we go into different high schools across Philadelphia, we work with a teacher and their World History or AP Government class, and we try to relate this relatively abstract idea to the tangibles that the students see around them. Our relationships with these schools have really been thriving. And several schools have been with us for the past three years. The theme for this year “Civil and Criminal Justice: Incarceration” touches on several extremely important topics, ranging from the recent Senate review of CIA detention centers to Rikers, to acceptable force for the police. If you are interested in helping out on the project, please contact Daniel Bu at danielbu12@gmail.com.

Date: Saturday, February 28th
Tentative Venue: University of Pennsylvania
Welcome to the new CEDAW blog, where, as the UNA-GP’s Legal Fellow and CEDAW researcher, I will be posting weekly updates on my research and on news and current events regarding the issues that the CEDAW treaty seeks to address.

The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), adopted in 1979 by the UN General Assembly, is often described as an international bill of rights for women, according to the UN Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women. The treaty contains a preamble and 30 separate articles, defines what constitutes discrimination against women, and sets up an agenda for nation states to act to end such discrimination. The United States, though initially a strong proponent of CEDAW and a key party in drafting the treaty, has not yet ratified it (and the only other countries which have not done so include: Iran, Sudan, South Sudan, Somalia, Palau and Tonga). The goal of this blog is to provide information, spark debate, and generate interest at the local and national level for women’s rights issues and CEDAW ratification.

This past week, on November 25, the UN celebrated International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women. Following this day will be 16 Days of Activism against Gender Violence, to end on December 10 (Human Rights Day), as a chance to mobilize and raise awareness for gender-based violence. U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry stated in commemoration of the event:

"Simply put, we must all do more to end violence against women in all its forms, wherever and whenever it occurs, and it starts by acknowledging it. There can be no conspiracy of silence. The sad truth is that one in three women will experience gender-based violence in her lifetime. This violence knows no class, religious, or racial boundaries. And it comes at a terrible cost - not only for the woman or girl, but for families, communities, and entire countries. Preventing it is the only way to achieve a future of peace, stability, and prosperity."

The CEDAW treaty does not contain a provision directly addressing violence against women. Yet Article 6 of the treaty, for instance, states, "States
Parties shall take all appropriate measures, including legislation, to suppress all forms of traffic in women and exploitation of prostitution of women. Violence against women includes both physical and sexual violence. According to UN statistics, about 120 million girls have been forced into intercourse or other sexual acts at some point in their lives; and 133 million women and girls have undergone female genital mutilation. See more here.

It is often hard to imagine that in 2014, millions of girls and women around the world still experience widespread violence and gender-based discrimination without impunity. It is even harder to believe that the United States still has not stepped forward to ratify CEDAW and thereby cement its commitment to protecting women's rights. The passage of the Violence Against Women Act was a strong step forward, but CEDAW ratification would signal to the world a true commitment to protecting women's rights on an international scale. In the next few days until Human Rights Day, the focus on ending violence against women will enhance the focus on strengthening women's rights as a whole. Stay tuned for other posts addressing such rights to follow.

Watch remarks by Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon at the Commemoration of the International Day to End Violence Against here.

Be sure to read future posts of Lana's Blog on our website.

---

1 in 3 women throughout the world will experience physical and/or sexual violence by a partner or sexual violence by a non-partner

Map showing prevalence of intimate partner violence by WHO region

KEY:
- Region of the Americas
- African Region
- Eastern Mediterranean Region
- European Region
- South-East Asia Region
- Western Pacific Region
- High income countries

All statistics can be found in the report entitled Global and regional estimates of violence against women. Prevalence and health effects of intimate partner violence and non-partner sexual violence, by the World Health Organization, the London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine, and the South African Medical Research Council, found here:

Hello All!

Exciting news to share: My NYE 2015 will be experienced in Paris! I’ve noted before what I hope to accomplish with these NYE trips here.

It is my hope to challenge whatever sense I may have about life in France. I welcome the thoughts of any readers regarding such.

Is it my hope to see fireworks? ACTUALLY, they do not shoot fireworks at the Eiffel Tower in Paris! *gasp*

As explained here, the Eiffel Tower will be beautifully lit, BUT it does not seem that there will actually be fireworks. Watch this (LOUD) video of NYE-celebrating.

How funny it is that I go from having seen in-person the newest world record for fireworks to not seeing any this NYE? :) This is partly why I go on these trips - in order to experience the sense of change/difference from year-to-year. It was from my first being in another country, visiting Taiwan prior to my having taught in South Korea, that I found myself excited by what I may misunderstand about how people around the world choose to act on particular days and for particular reasons.

So, just what are some of the goals held by the French for this coming year? "Climate change" is an issue held more dearly by many around the world as time progresses, and such had been noted about earlier this year by French Minister of Foreign Affairs, Laurent Fabius, at the Annual French Ambassadors Conference in Paris: "... [regarding] the importance of the United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP21/CMP11) that his country will host at the end of 2015, where governments have agreed to reach a new, universal climate change agreement. [About this] Mr Fabius said: 'We need to get a legally binding agreement. This is the first goal and not an easy one. Afterwards, every country will make pledges, there will also be essential finance dimensions, such as the Green Climate Fund and carbon pricing.'"

Here's hoping that our countries may meet the goals set by them and that the year is productive for many countries around the world. Cheers! Santé!
On December 10, in celebration of International Human Rights Day and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the UNA-GP sponsored a panel discussion on one of the burning issues of our time: Human Rights and Press Freedom. UNA-GP recognizes the strong link between press freedom and the basic rights of free expression and democracy -- no press freedom, no democracy! The event was co-sponsored by the Global Philadelphia Association and The Ethical Society of Philadelphia. It took place at the Ethical Society’s building on Philadelphia’s Rittenhouse Square.

Our panel was keynoted by Courtney Radsch, Advocacy Director of the Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ). Michael Matza, staff writer from the Philadelphia Inquirer and Signe Wilkinson, editorial cartoonist from the Philadelphia Daily News and Inquirer served as responders. According to CPJ, 52 journalists have been killed in 2014 and almost 1,100 since 1992. In 2013, 211 were jailed while over 450 have been exiled from their countries since 2008 just for trying to do their jobs. In the United States, reporters’ phone logs have been secretly subpoenaed and seized by the Justice Department, a New York Times reporter, James Risen, faces the threat of jail for not revealing a source and the shadow of the NSA hangs over journalists’ email and telephone communications.

In her talk, Ms. Radsch covered virtually every continent in describing the challenges to press freedom, including in the US. She also made it clear that journalists using the Internet and Social Media are very much at risk. Ms. Radsch spoke of her work with the family of murdered American photojournalist, James Foley, to establish ongoing support for journalists facing threats. In addition, she emphasized that the vast majority of journalists killed, jailed and exiled are non-Western. Mr. Matza spoke of his personal encounters with threats while working for 6 years in the Middle East and Ms. Wilkinson offered the important perspective of cartoonists. She gave examples of repression and threats to cartoonists whose work can quickly come under dictatorial fire since they are direct and usually easy to understand.

A lively audience Question and Answer session was expertly led by Peter Chawaga, panel moderator and Editor of Global Philadelphia’s Emerging International Journalists program.
Topics to be discussed:

- The role of water in development
- The use of sustainable technology
- Current sanitation and water issues
- School facilities and gender differences

Create a universal template for school hygiene using cases from

7 Regions

Africa, Asia, Central and South America, Oceanic, North America, Eastern Europe

Like us on Facebook.com/PhillyWMUN
Register Now!

UNA-USA and the Mid-Atlantic Region invite you to

Members' Day at the UN and the 7th Annual Mid-Atlantic Regional Conference

Friday, February 20, 2015
United Nations Headquarters
First Avenue at 47th Street, New York, NY 10017

*****

Join fellow UNA-USA members and UN supporters at the UN Headquarters for Members' Day, a day of dynamic and informative discussion on the most pressing issues facing the United Nations. UNA-USA members will get exclusive access to the UN, where they will hear from experts on topics like climate change and human rights, and network with community leaders, academics and students, and representatives from think tanks and like-minded organizations.

Don't miss out on what is expected to be the largest gathering of UN advocates in the United States. Visit www.unausa.org/membersday, and stay tuned to UNA-USA email and social media communications for more details on the conference program and speakers. Email membership@unausa.org if you have additional questions.
8TH ANNUAL CONFERENCE
“WASH Projects in Developing Countries: Lessons Learned"

SAVE THE DATE

Where: Wharton School, University of Pennsylvania
When: Thursday, March 26, 2015

Keynote Address by:
Martha Newsome, Global Director of Health, Nutrition, and WASH, World Vision International

And participation of representatives from the United Nations, World Bank, USEPA, International Water and Sanitation Leaders, and Major NGOs, including:

- Susan Davis, Executive Director, Improve International
- Elynn Walter, Sustainability Director, WASH Advocates
- Dr. Jayanti Bandyopadhyay, Professor at the Business School at Salem State University [invited]
- Tim Prewitt, CEO, iDE [invited]

The Global Water Alliance (GWA) is a network of interested organizations and individuals committed to helping to meet the UN Millennium Development Goals for water/sanitation throughout the world. By utilizing the resources and expertise of the Philadelphia Region and beyond, we work to increase global access to safe water, sanitation, and hygiene services.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity/Event</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Location/info</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>UNA-GP Board Meeting</td>
<td>January 8th</td>
<td>Thursday</td>
<td>5:30 PM - 8:00 PM</td>
<td>Friends Center 1501 Cherry Street, Philadelphia, PA 19102 All members are welcome to attend</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alternative Model UN Conference on Water Stewardship Topic: Sanitation and Hygiene in Schools</td>
<td>January 19th, MLK Day</td>
<td>Monday</td>
<td>All Day</td>
<td>Creating a water module about sanitation in schools from a girl’s perspective Schools have been approached. Venue: University of Pennsylvania</td>
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<td>Tentative: Workshop Youth Building Roots Program</td>
<td>January 19th, MLK Day</td>
<td>Monday</td>
<td>AM Hours</td>
<td>Arame Niang will present Youth Building Roots Program to engage students in service learning regarding urban agriculture Tentative Venue: Girard College</td>
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<tr>
<td>Habitat III Preparatory Committee Meeting</td>
<td>January 27th</td>
<td>Tuesday</td>
<td>5:00 PM</td>
<td>Friends Center, Room 21 1501 Cherry Street, Philadelphia, PA 19102 All members interested are welcome to attend</td>
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<tr>
<td>High School Conference on Rule of Law Topic: Incarceration Policies and Practices</td>
<td>February 28th</td>
<td>Saturday</td>
<td>All Day</td>
<td>This third MUN RoL will focus on incarceration policies. Tentative venue: University of Pennsylvania</td>
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<td>International Women’s Day: Global Migrant Rights and Justice</td>
<td>March 4th</td>
<td>Wednesday</td>
<td>6:00 PM</td>
<td>Celebration of initiatives advocating for the rights of migrant women and their families. Speakers explore immigration policies, women and children. Location: International House, South American Room, 3701 Chestnut Street, Philadelphia PA 19104</td>
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You can help the United Nations Association!

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 mpatel@una-gp.org

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!

The UNA-GP December 2014 newsletter is a collaborative effort:
• Layout and design editor: Carolyn Curry
• Board liaison: Ed Gracely
• President: Mary Day Kent
• Executive Director: Christiaan Morssink

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 and upcoming events, and ways to get involved, including joining and volunteering. In addition, we are on social media sites and send out our monthly newsletters. 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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