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Dear Members and Friends of UNA-GP,

I am writing from Colombia, a country on the brink of declaring peace after decades of civil war that has left it with the world's highest number of land mines still in place and a displaced population that rivals Syria’s. Nearly three years of negotiations in Havana between the government and the FARC guerrilla force are expected to culminate in a signed agreement in March. A significant turning point in January was the vote by the UN to support the peace process and the post conflict programs. An interesting perspective is that this will be an opportunity for the UN to be successful after so many situations like Syria where conflict has been intractable. From the Colombian side they feel that with the UN backing the peace process, there is no turning back.

In addition to the formal process of ending the conflict, it seems that in many ways the people, on both sides, have reached the point of just walking away from the war. Sentry boxes along the road are abandoned, places that used to be off limits are now hopping with tourists, national as well as foreign. Everyone is geared to rebuilding the country, even as they recognize the difficulty.

Another thought from Colombia relates to Lent and the Pope (who is expected to visit here next year, after the peace). Colombia is still a culturally Catholic country and very few people are seen on Ash Wednesday without the cross in ashes on their forehead. Those few like myself with a naked forehead get quizzical looks. However, I do still think about the idea of Lent as the time to fast or give up indulgences. I was thinking of giving up French fries, a pretty frivolous choice, when I saw Pope Francis' s message calling for a “fast from indifference”, such a strong challenge to us all, regardless of religious background. Indifference is possibly the hardest thing to set aside. This message seems to me very connected to all the goals of the UN and those of us who try to support it.

Mary Day Kent, UNA-GP President
The United Nations is confronting large problems on a large scale every day. We learn for example that in January 2016 there were nearly 35 new cases of malaria diagnosed every minute in South Sudan. That is 35 new lives in danger every 60 seconds. Meanwhile the WHO has sounded the alarm bell about the Zika virus, which reaping havoc in South and Central America and is spreading north and will reach the USA by this summer. Moreover, the UN has to deal with the machinations of world powers in its dealing with the Syrian civil war, and worry is building over the stockpiling of weapons by China on artificial islands. The Afghan debacle seems to be without end and the European Union’s constitutional crises keeps many a politician awake.

We work on informing and engaging the residents of Philadelphia and surrounding communities about the urgency of much of the UN’s work. Thus, we focus on such problems as the global water crisis, the political and humanitarian needs of refugees, and the global arms race. We educate about the UN’s positive contributions to art, science, sports, and ecology. We collaborate with others to create strong policy advocacy, whether regarding the “Iran Nuclear Deal” or the refugee policies in regards to Syria, Somalia and Central America. In all of this, we try to think and act, as the pope says, to build bridges.

We also want to assure that in our future we have a citizenry that has a global outlook, values peace, fair trade, global equity in health, habitat, and political freedom. So our chapter in Philadelphia pays special attention to promoting a global orientation in students and youngsters who are “within reach.” Our teams of work study fellows are visiting high schools to prepare for the Model UN on the Rule of Law and the Model UN on Disarmament. We have scheduled meetings with schools to bring the Youth Building Roots program to our youngsters. Following our collaboration with the Model UN on Water
Stewardship the UNA-GP is happily supporting the 200th anniversary of the Fairmount Water Works, which itself is also a spectacular aspect of the World Heritage City’s project. On the calendar are meetings with the Global Citizens 365 Project as well as with officials to explore the use of sports and service programs for our youth as they represent the diversity that is Philadelphia.

Our education work has reached the point where we now seriously need to write grant requests. The work is labor intensive, involves much traffic and cannot be sustained on volunteer support only. Any of our members who can help with this, please step forward.

We also would love to organize a global citizen awareness summer camp for rising seniors in Philadelphia, focusing mainly on the labor market. We have found during our work with students at high schools that very little is known about the global labor market. We have developed a 20 day camp schedule, and we are going to cost out the project and seek funding, through grants or through fees; however, we also need input in finalizing mentor participation, network contacts and whatever else professional members of the UNA-GP can bring to the table. I am working with Megan Bridges on seeking a catchy title and tagline; I have been told that the play on words “Labor Camp” will not fly, cannot fly.

Our membership numbers are increasing, and we realize that it may be prudent to update our “welcoming” notification and more importantly, organize an annual orientation meeting for new members. This will be an agenda item at our next board meeting. Our membership committee shall report about that in due time.

Talking about committees, the nominating committee, under the leadership of Carol Jenkins, is interested in (self) nominations from the membership. If you want to know more, please email her or me.
A Few Words From Our Volunteer Coordinator

UNA-GP’s newly formed Membership Committee has been meeting regularly in preparation for this Spring’s Model UN conferences and could use your help! Membership support helps in bringing programming for the local community, its schools and university students. Members are more connected to world issues through their participation in Chapter events and their involvement in UNA-USA/UN program. They grow local support for United Nations ideals and its work in Philadelphia’s community.

Manisha Patel, UNA-GP Volunteer Coordinator

Manisha Patel
mpatel@una-gp.org

Spotlight on Human Rights

Human Rights First

Human Rights First has a key slogan: “It’s not about who THEY are, it’s about who WE are!” Human Rights First is an independent advocacy organization whose mission is to foster human rights by challenging the United States to live up to its ideals. Its position is that U.S. leadership is essential in the global struggle for human rights. It presses our government and private companies to respect human rights and the rule of law. When this does not happen, Human Rights First demands reform, accountability and justice. The organization sees upholding human rights not only as a moral value, but vital to American national interests. It is a source of policy solutions and ideas in areas such as refugee rights globally and at the US Southern border, ending torture by the U.S., LGBT rights, closing Guantanamo prison, human trafficking and many other areas. It places a high value on developing bi-partisan approaches to human rights issues whenever possible.

HRF has offices in New York, Washington and Houston. It offers a free weekly online newsletter, Washington Week on Human Rights, has a regular presence on social media and has recently initiated the UPTOGOOD movement to assist Syrian refugees.
The Global Water Alliance (GWA) recognizes that WASH and water management are defining global topics for this century, and wants students to be involved in creating the best ideas to reach that vision for 2030. GWA invites students and young professionals, our future leaders, to enter the GWA Student WASH Competition. Participants are to showcase and propose innovative WASH projects and ideas for the year 2030 in the form of papers, posters, or videos. The competition allows participants to exchange knowledge and ideas and learn from international experts. Entries may focus on anything related to WASH. This is an opportunity to spearhead innovative solutions at a global scale. The winner of the competition will be invited to present their work at the GWA Conference on April 6.

Innovations for the future that students may want to consider include but are not limited to:

- new technologies
- Reuse of waste water, including human waste
- Financing of WASH projects
- Integrating WASH issues with other SDGs
- Developing public-private partnerships
- National laws and/or policies
- Market-based approaches
- gender and social issues regarding WASH

This competition is open to all students currently enrolled at an academic institution. International participants are welcome. All entries must be submitted to ralibros@sp2.upenn.edu along with an application entry form, which can be found on the February 29 entry of the events page on our website.

Submission deadline: February 29th, 2016

Prize:

- Monetary award $ 500.
- Invitation to present their ideas at the GWA Conference.
- Recognition in a GWA press release and on the GWA website.
- The runners-up will also be invited to attend the GWA Conference
Philadelphia, January 20, 2016

Re: 4th Model United Nations Conference on the Rule of Law
    1st Model United Nations Conference on Disarmament

DEAR TEACHERS and STUDENTS,

It is my privilege to invite you and your school to participate in the 2016 Model United Conferences organized by the UNA-GP and hosted at the University of Pennsylvania. Our conferences serve as interschool debate platforms to tackle global issues with action at the local stage. For example this year, we just finished on MLK day our conference on Rainwater Management, which brought together students from seven high schools to critically analyze water use practices in the world and at home here in Philadelphia. The resolution drafted at this conference will be presented to Mayor Kenney’s office within the next few weeks.

Our upcoming conferences are scheduled for April 2 (The Rule of Law: Labor Relations/Fair Labor practices) and March 19 (Disarmament: Small Arms Trade Treaty). For both conferences we have developed three, one class hour, training modules to prepare students ahead of the conferences. We invite you to participate in one or more of our conferences and we will gladly come to your school to do the three training sessions. Please find attached brochures for each of the MUNs.

The Model United Nations experience at the UNA-GP x Penn really is unique. It is also free of charge. Instead of multi-day simulations that focus on and require both extensive rules and fees, we emphasize more the in-depth exploration of relevant current events over the course of one day. We prefer to focus on content and action over protocol and formalities. To underscore the action component, at the conference students will represent different Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), and will use their missions to debate specific issues in both large plenary sessions and breakout sessions.

The experience will not end with the Model United Nations Conference. A key message throughout is the active participation in NGOs in the real world. We are only a model United Nations in the sense that the discussions at our conference will prepare students to join, participate and act in these NGOs in the real world. We are excited to start. We hope you will join us.

Warmest regards,

Daniel Bu, Conference Coordinator at danieldb@sas.upenn.edu

Dr. Christiaan Morssink, Executive Director of the UNA-GP at morssink@una-gp.org
MLK DAY, January 18th, 2016

Mayor Jim Kenney
Mayor’s Office, City Hall
1501 Market St #215
Philadelphia, PA, 19102

SCALING UP OUR GREENING POLICIES

Dear Mayor Kenney:

We, high school students from several schools in Greater Philadelphia, having participated in the 2016 Water Model United Nations Conference held at the University of Pennsylvania to address storm water management, petition you, as you begin your term as the 99th mayor of the City of Brotherly Love, to make storm water management the cornerstone of your green city policy with a pledge “to make Philadelphia the greenest city in the United States within a generation.” It is crucial that the city manages its water through sustainable and innovative policies and technologies to mitigate the many consequences of climate change and increasing runoff, which we have detailed below.

Why do we believe Philadelphia should put more time and resources into managing storm water? In terms of the status of water issues in Philadelphia, we have found that the sewer system currently in use needs severe renovation. The average age of water lines in Philadelphia is roughly 78 years old, while the average age of wastewater lines is about 100 years old. Although water treatment plants are constantly renewed to meet water pollution standards, they are also roughly of the same age as water pipelines. Moreover, the recent water crisis in Flint, Michigan, due to high levels of poisonous lead, has shown that public water systems require careful attention to avoid potential health hazards.

In Philadelphia, health hazards are caused by climate change and runoff. Our beautiful city will become more vulnerable to water-related natural incidents. Events, such as hurricanes Sandy and Katrina, will become more frequent and severe, impacting the infrastructure of cities, such as Philadelphia. Sandy caused major flood damage to subway lines and beach towns such as the Jersey Shore and Far Rockaway, New York. It is one of the most expensive hurricanes, costing over $30 billion in damages and $2.6 billion in repairs. As for Hurricane Katrina, it was the most deadly hurricane in our history and, due to the ecological surroundings, it caused major flooding, especially in low-lying, poverty-stricken areas. Philadelphia’s future could look more like New York and New Orleans, as it is projected to be the tenth worst hit city in the United States by hurricanes. Consequently, the city will encounter more flood issues in the future.

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To read this letter in full, please go to the UNA-GP website.
International Women's Day 2016: Global Perspectives on Women, Food Security and Agriculture

Tuesday, March 15th, 2016 at 6:30PM. International House Philadelphia, South America Room, 2nd Floor. Get your FREE ticket here.

2016 is an important year for the future of agriculture and development. The new Sustainable Development Goals, or “SDGs”, will shape the next 15 years of policies, programs and funding. More than any other sector, agriculture is the common thread which holds the 17 SDGs together. SDG #2 calls to end hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture. SDG # 5 calls for gender equality and empowerment of all women and girls. Women produce over half the food worldwide, yet women farmers produce 20-30% less than their male counterparts largely due to differences in access and resources. Investing in women in agriculture can address not only hunger and malnutrition but other challenges including poverty; water and energy use; climate change; and unsustainable production and consumption.

Join us for a celebratory reception featuring a performance by the Anna Crusis Women's Choir, the oldest feminist choir in the U.S., and a panel discussion with:

Lisa Mosca, Senior Manager, Philadelphia Horticultural Society City Harvest Program
Betsy Teutsch, Author of 100 Under $100: 100 Tools for Empowering Global Women
Kirtrina M. Baxter, Community Organizer, Garden Justice Legal Initiative

Sponsored by:
The University of Pennsylvania's South Asia Center, Middle East Center, Center for East Asian Studies, Gender, Sexuality and Women's Studies Program, Asian American Studies Program, Penn Women’s Center, Graduate Student Center, Family Resource Center, Netter Center's Agatston Urban Nutrition Initiative, and Peace Day Philadelphia, One Book, One Philadelphia, United Nations Association of Greater Philadelphia, Global Philadelphia Association and International House Philadelphia

Anastasia Shown, who is once again organizing this spectacular event
9TH ANNUAL GLOBAL WATER ALLIANCE CONFERENCE


SPEAKERS
Tom Slaymaker (UNICEF)
Rochelle Rainey (USAID)
Sarah Bramley (Save the Children)

Click to Register for the Conference

Also have students get involved by participating in the GWA Student WASH Competition! They are encouraged to propose innovative WASH projects and ideas for the year 2030. See below for more details.
The Philadelphia we want, The city we need

We are preparing ourselves in Philadelphia for this conference, an opportunity offered only once every 20 years. Faculty and students on the different campuses are having workshops and seminars, and infusing the materials in class instructions.

At UNA-GP we have formed a working group: PHILLY PREPS FOR HABITAT III. The working group wants to bring the message of Habitat III to the classrooms, to the citizens, to the politicians.

Contact: info@una-gp.org

The official call for participation will be coming out in March. For more information, please see the Habitat III website.

THE THIRD UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON HOUSING AND SUSTAINABLE URBAN DEVELOPMENT

Quito, Ecuador, 17–20 October, 2016

The Future We Want, the City We Need

Habitat III will be one of the first global conferences after the Post 2015 Development Agenda. It is an opportunity to discuss and chart new pathways in response to the challenges of urbanization and the opportunities it offers for the implementation of the sustainable development goals.

The conference brings together diverse urban actors such as governments, local authorities, civil society, the private sector, academic institutions and all relevant interest groups to review urban and housing policies affecting the future of cities within an international governance architecture, with a view to generate a ‘New Urban Agenda’ for the 21st century which recognizes the ever-changing dynamics of human civilization. Habitat III offers Member States an opportunity to discuss a New Urban Agenda that will focus on policies and strategies that can result in effectively harnessing the power and forces behind urbanization. The Conference will result in a concise, focused, forward-looking and action-oriented outcome document: the New Urban Agenda. Rethinking the Urban Agenda is embracing urbanization at all levels of human settlements. More appropriate policies can embrace urbanization across physical space, bridging urban, peri-urban and rural areas, and assist governments in addressing challenges through national and local development policy frameworks. And also it is integrating equity as an issue of social justice, ensuring access to the public sphere, extending opportunities and increasing the commons.
## UNA-GP Upcoming Events

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity/Event</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Location/Info</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Contest Submission Deadline</td>
<td>February 29th</td>
<td>Monday</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Imagining Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH) Solutions in the Year 2030: A Student Competition by the Global Water Alliance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observation of International Women’s Day</td>
<td>March 15th</td>
<td>Tuesday</td>
<td>6:30PM</td>
<td>See page 9 for details Location: International House, University of Pennsylvania</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Model UN Conference on Disarmament</td>
<td>March 19th</td>
<td>Saturday</td>
<td>10:00AM - 3:30PM</td>
<td>Model UN Conference for local high schools on Disarmament: Small Arms Trade Theory and its Impact Location: University of Pennsylvania</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNA-GP Board Meeting</td>
<td>March 19th</td>
<td>Saturday</td>
<td>10:00AM - 12:00PM</td>
<td>Location TBD. All interested are welcome to attend.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Model UN Conference on Rule of Law</td>
<td>April 2nd</td>
<td>Saturday</td>
<td>10:00AM - 3:00PM</td>
<td>Model UN Conference for local high schools on Rule of Law: Labor Relations. Please note the date of this event has changed. Location: Terrace Room, Cohen Hall, University of Pennsylvania</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9th Annual Conference of Global Water Alliance</td>
<td>April 6th</td>
<td>Wednesday</td>
<td>All Day</td>
<td>Part of Global Water Alliance's World Water Day celebration. Screening of documentary F.L.O.W. followed by a moderated discussion. Location: Temple Fox School of Business</td>
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United Nations Association of Greater Philadelphia | 1501 Cherry Street, Philadelphia, PA 19102

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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 involved in, we are always in need of 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 questions any time at mpatel@una-gp.org.

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

The UNA-GP February 2016 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 American (UNA-USA). Our website offers information about our mission and upcoming events, and ways to get involved, including volunteering and becoming a member. Please take a look at our social media accounts and monthly newsletters!

Volunteers with all types of skill sets are welcome to work with the UNA-GP, short or long term. If interested, please contact Manisha Patel, Volunteer Coordinator and Board Member, at mpatel@una-gp.org.

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