



United Nations Association of Australia WA Division

# UN Matters

July/Aug 2014

## MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT

Carolyne Gatward

Congratulations to our newly elected Executive and thank you to the tremendous team of volunteers who again delivered so much in 2013/14. One of the most delightful things about our Association is the generous spirit of care, commitment and kindness demonstrated through our dealings with each other and the community. If you are thinking of becoming more actively involved in our activities, do not hesitate!

Our "full house" AGM gathering heard a fascinating account from Dorsa Nazemi about her humanitarian activities with the International Committee of the Red Cross in locations such as Afghanistan, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan. Her courage, resilience and optimism were inspiring and we wish her well with her forthcoming assignment in Nigeria.

Join us for the 30th anniversary of the UN International Day of Peace on **Sunday 21 September**. Vice-President Ricardo Hernandez will be speaking about the importance of this special day, followed by an afternoon of songs and prayers for peace. Proceedings commence from 2-5pm at the Heritage Community Centre, North Perth. See flier (page 2) for more information.

On **Thursday 25 September**, we are partnering with the Australian Institute of International Affairs (AIIA) to host a function focusing on Australia and the UN Human Rights Council (HRC). We will look at how the HRC works, what rights people have and how contributing to the operations of the HRC can make a difference. Our speakers will include academics, representatives from civil organisations and DFAT. The event, sponsored by DFAT, will be held from 6-8pm in the conference room at St Catherine's College, UWA. Tea, coffee and home-baked cookies will be available from 5.30pm.

I will be attending WFUNA's human rights program for UNAs at the UN, Geneva from 15-19 September, during the second week of the HRC's 27th session. The program looks at how Associations such as ours can advance human rights issues using UN mechanisms. I will be giving a briefing about this shortly afterwards at the 25 September panel event.

All members will have an opportunity to participate in our strategic planning exercise in the coming months. This will be a chance to help guide the organisation into the future by considering what areas we would like to focus on and how can we strengthen the progress we have made so far in reaching our goals. Further details will be provided shortly.

Planning is underway for the celebration of UN Day. Our function will be held from 5.30pm on **Thursday 23 October** at the Constitutional Centre, West Perth. Save the date!



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### SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST

- UNAAWA Young Professionals celebrate International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples
- Yolande Frank Award judged
- Become a part of the Newsletter Team



**INTERNATIONAL DAY OF PEACE**  
**21 SEPTEMBER 2014**

**THE RIGHT  
OF PEOPLES  
TO PEACE**



You are invited to celebrate the 30th anniversary of the International Day of Peace. Everyone will join together with prayers and songs for peace.

Peace is transcendent to religions, borders, ethnicity and age. This is a time to unite and remember the freedom we enjoy through peace.

*Your presence is important - by uniting together we can show support for the cessation of hostilities around the world.*

**Date:** Sunday 21st September 2014

**Time:** 2.00pm - 5.00pm

**Venue:** Heritage Community Centre  
445 Charles Street  
North Perth

**Supporters:**



**United  
Nations  
Association  
of Australia  
WA Division**

**Religions for Peace**

*Different Faiths, Common Action.*

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## QUIZ NIGHT



The Irish Club of Subiaco was the centre of yet another successful fundraising event in July. This year's Quiz Night was a fun-filled night of laughter, friendship and, of course, somewhat obscure trivia (who knew Vegemite was invented in 1922?). Ricardo Hernandez welcomed everyone to the event and Neesha Seth gave a short introduction to the UNAANA Young Professionals Network. The night of spirited and friendly competition was a testament to the International Day of Friendship for which it was held. With tables made up of the intelligent friends and family of UNAANA members only a few points separated the top three teams in the end.

We would like to thank Ricardo and the other members of the team who worked so hard to bring the trivia night together. Thank you to Carlyne for organising the prizes, to Elsie for co-ordinating the raffle and to everyone else who helped out on the day.

Everyone's hard work made for an entertaining evening which was summed up by someone from my table who remarked, 'This was the best quiz night I've been to!' (we did, incidentally, come in third place). Thank you to everyone who came, your support of the UNAANA is much appreciated.

[Colleen Harmer, Executive Member]

## WINE AND CHEESE WITH THE EXECUTIVE

Executive members met with members of the UNAANA at a wine and cheese night hosted in the Subiaco office in July. The intimate gathering was a great opportunity to share the work of the UNAANA with our community. Carlyne Gatward and Ricardo Hernandez welcomed all to the event, thanking the Executive team for their involvement over the years and encouraging new members to become active in our many social events and groups such as the Human Rights Forum. Neesha Seth gave an articulate rundown of the function of the Association within the larger body based in Canberra. In all, it was an encouraging start to what we hope will be a continuing tradition of the Association. For those who were unable to attend, we encourage you to keep up-to-date with our other social events via Facebook, Twitter and the events page on our website.

## UNAAWA YOUNG PROFESSIONALS CELEBRATE INTERNATIONAL DAY OF THE WORLD'S INDIGENOUS PEOPLES



UNAAWA YP at the Aboriginal Art Gallery in Kings Park

Perth city lights served as a backdrop to a celebration of the International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples at the Aboriginal Art Gallery in Kings Park. Hosted by the UNAAWA Young Professionals, the event was aimed at educating young professionals on the UN's commitment to supporting 'the rights of Indigenous peoples through policies and programmes at both the national and international level' (<http://www.un.org/en/events/indigenousday/>).

The YP were honoured to have Nolan Hunter, CEO of the Kimberley Land Council (KLC), speak at the event. The KLC represents and brings together around 25 different Aboriginal tribal groups from across northern Western Australia, and assists Aboriginal people in 'getting country back, caring for country, and securing the future' (<http://klc.org.au>). Speaking about native title, Mr Hunter highlighted the importance of the UN's commitment to the rights of Indigenous people and explained that the concept of Aboriginal land ownership has long been problematic. Because the Aboriginal people did not have a written law relating to territoriality and sovereignty in the European sense, the concept of *terra nullius*, or 'land belonging to no one', informed the colonisation of Australia (and subsequently Aboriginal land) by the British. Consequently, the Aboriginal

people had no legal right to their traditional land until 1993, when the *Native Title Act 1993* was established.

The *Native Title Act* recognises traditional law and custom as reason for a legal claim to land and/or water ownership by native peoples (For more see [http://www.auroraproject.com.au/what\\_is\\_native\\_title](http://www.auroraproject.com.au/what_is_native_title)). Drawing a line to connect the UN and Indigenous Australians, Mr Hunter claimed that native title is fundamentally about human rights. Indeed, the KLC is committed to the UN objectives that underpin the International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples. Specifically, this means setting up policies and programmes to help strengthen Indigenous communities economically and socially. As Mr Hunter said of the KLC's involvement in the recent UN Forum on Indigenous Issues held in New York, 'That's why we are heading to the United Nations because we want to advocate and lobby for a set of international standards for economic engagement and nation building with Indigenous people.'

'Our long-term vision is to develop global benchmarks for Indigenous economic engagement, building upon the standards we have created in the Kimberley. Through having an international benchmark, Indigen-

ous communities will be treated fairly, irrelevant of the country they live in' (<http://klc.org.au/2014/05/09/klc-heads-to-new-york-to-host-united-nations-event/>). Mr Hunter emphasised that recognising Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in our Constitution will go a long way to uniting our nation and closing the gap between non-Indigenous and Indigenous people. It will create a level playing field, from which Aboriginal people can improve their socioeconomic circumstances.

This is one of many such events that the YP hope will inspire young professionals to engage with the aims and directives of the United Nations, making it clear how the seemingly distant actions of the UN are indeed applicable and necessary at the local level here in Western Australia.

[Colleen Harmer, Executive Member]

## YOLANDE FRANK AWARD

The 2014 prize winner of the Yolande Frank Memorial Award was announced on 17th August at the UNAAWA's Annual General Meeting. Each year the competition engages children from primary schools in Western Australia by asking them to create visual representations that reflect an article taken from the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*. Article 24 was selected for 2014 –

*Everyone has the right to rest and leisure, including reasonable limitation of working hours and periodic holidays with pay.*

We are grateful to the judges who generously gave their time and made the selections which will be announced in the next newsletter following the presentations to students at their respective schools.

The winning entry is being framed and will be hung in the office. It is also being printed as a postcard and will be available to purchase from the office.

## Who was Yolande Frank?

Yolande Frank was born in Hungary on 16 September 1921. She had a happy start to life with her loving parents and four siblings. Then her town was occupied by the Germans and her life changed forever because she was Jewish. Her whole family was sent to the Auschwitz Concentration Camp, where her parents and some siblings perished. After the war she migrated to New Zealand and then Australia.

Yolande had extraordinary energy and exuded such a love of life and optimism that most people had no idea of the hard times she had lived through. Yolande was passionate about human rights and was always ready to raise her voice for equality and respect for all. She was an active and valued member of UNAAWA for many years until her death and she had a passion to ensure that children understood the importance of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

The Memorial Award was established in Yolande's honour after her death in 2009. It was envisaged that the establishment of the Award would provide an opportunity for students to learn about the concept of Human Rights and their application in our daily lives – and in the lives of others!

[Kay Hallahan, Executive Member]

(Photo: The Yolande Frank judging in action)



## GLOBAL REPRESENTATIVE'S REPORT

I wish to advance for all the UNAAWA members the importance and significance of Australia's membership at the UN Security Council in New York.

I have written previously on Australia's role at the UN. Today, Monday 22 July, Julie Bishop spoke with decisive discipline in framing and negotiating a successful Security Council resolution to allow land access to the Ukraine air crash site irrespective of conflict between Russia and the Ukraine.

The situation at this disastrous human wreckage site is unspeakable, moreover, unthinkable and distressing. This is evidenced by the conduct of the separatists who are pushing a political agenda that in this modern day cannot be tolerated in preserving peace and the sacredness of human life.



We should be very proud of Australia's seat and respect at the UN, as progressing the Security Council resolution has allowed victims of the air crash to be humanely recovered.

Conflicts in Israel, Gaza, Sudan and Kenya and child hostages in Nigeria are present-day events, however the UN is there to undertake one of its primary mandates—to bring and sustain peace. Indeed, a difficult task.

*(Above: Julie Bishop at the UN, UN Photo by Amanda Voisard)*

I felt that it is an important statement to record, as I did at one time travel to Bosnia-Herzegovina, that I gained the tangible heartbreaking experience of the scars of that Serbian conflict.

Today, by chance I ran into the permanent Australian Ambassador based in Norway, a one time resident of Perth. It is indeed a small world.

As a point of interest, we were to travel to Russia but have cancelled.

My message that I wish to impart from the above narrative is to convey to all our members that we belong to an important organization and we are all special individuals.

[Joseph Caruso, UNAAWA Global Representative]

## NEWS FROM OTHER ORGANISATIONS

### **An Evening with Munjed Al Muderis**

Dymocks Garden City in association with Trinity College are hosting an evening with Dr. Munjed Al Muderis at Trinity College. Iraqi born Dr. Munjed Al Muderis grew up during Saddam Hussein's reign and became a doctor. He had to flee Iraq when he refused to remove the ears of army deserters and escaped to Kuala Lumpur where he met two people smugglers who he fled to Australia with. Having gone through the refugee system and being repeatedly brutalized, Munjed was free to start a new life in Australia. Now, 15 years later, he is at the forefront of orthopedic medicine, pioneering a new form of prosthesis. He is one of the five surgeons in the world performing oseointegration. *Walking Free* is his amazing story.

When: Thursday 25 September, 6:30 for 7pm start

Where: Trinity College, 2 Trinity Avenue, East Perth

Cost: Adults \$10, Students \$5. Proceeds from ticket sales will be going to Edmund Rice Camps WA.

Bookings: <http://www.trybooking.com/97416>

More information: <https://www.facebook.com/events/582595591850589/?ref=22>

### **One World Centre**

*Coming together across cultures:* An evening of lively discussion, music, wine and nibbles, with talks from Madonna Anne and John Smoker.

When: Friday, 12 September, 5:30 - 8 pm.

Where: Southcare Hall, cnr Bickley Cres and Pether Rd, Manning

Cost: \$20 (\$15 concession)

RSVP: [admin@oneworldcentre.org.au](mailto:admin@oneworldcentre.org.au) (T) 9371 9133 by 5 Sept 2013

### **Mayors for Peace**

Public briefing on the international call to ban nuclear weapons. Speaker: Junko Morimoto, Hiroshima A-Bomb survivor.

When: Monday 22 September, 1-3pm.

Where: Fremantle Town Hall

More details: email [mayorsforpeace@fremantle.wa.gov.au](mailto:mayorsforpeace@fremantle.wa.gov.au) or call Elizabeth of Adrian on 9336 4501

### **Peace Walk—Celebrate the opening of Fremantle Peace Grove**

When: 21 September, 10am. Meet at Bathers Beach, Fremantle (10am) Walk to Peace Grove starts 11am.

Can't make the peace walk? Join at Peace Grove at 12:30pm (Cnr Lefroy & Carrington) BYO Picnic. Enjoy music, talks and more. Contact: [marcus@footprintsforpeace.org](mailto:marcus@footprintsforpeace.org); phone: 0400 505 765

### **Red Cross Fundamentals in International Humanitarian Law**

When: Wednesday 3 September, 5.30-8.30pm at the College of Law. See details at [www.trybooking.com/FMPG](http://www.trybooking.com/FMPG)

## TWO NEW WAYS TO GET INVOLVED

There are a number of ways to be involved with the UNAAWA. From social events to the Human Rights Forum, there is something for everyone. We want to draw your attention to two new opportunities. The first is with our new Women's Committee, headed by Louise Richardson. The second is as part of a newsletter team headed by Colleen Harmer. Details these exciting opportunities are below.

### Women's Committee

We are establishing a Women's Committee as part of the UNAAWA and would love for all to be involved. We had our first formal meeting in August where we discussed possibilities for advocacy and education. We will be meeting again in September, so we encourage anyone interested to email Louise Richardson at [womens.committee@unaa-wa.org.au](mailto:womens.committee@unaa-wa.org.au).

### Newsletter Team

The editor of the newsletter is calling for members to be a part of a reserve of writers for the newsletter. You would be asked to write short articles of 150-300 words for the newsletter. These will range in subject from UN-related topics (such as "What is the International Day of Friendship?") to UNAAWA-related topics (such as write-ups of our events). If you are interested, please email Colleen Harmer at [newsletter@unaa-wa.org.au](mailto:newsletter@unaa-wa.org.au) and she will provide you with more details.



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United Nations Association of  
Australia WA Inc

**TWITTER:** @UNAAWA



### UN IMPORTANT DATES

#### SEPTEMBER 2014

5 September	<a href="#"><u>International Day of Charity</u></a>
8 September	<a href="#"><u>International Literacy Day</u></a> [UNESCO]
12 September	<a href="#"><u>United Nations Day for South-South Cooperation</u></a>
15 September	<a href="#"><u>International Day of Democracy</u></a>
16 September	<a href="#"><u>International Day for the Preservation of the Ozone Layer</u></a>
21 September	<a href="#"><u>International Day of Peace</u></a>
25 September	<a href="#"><u>World Maritime Day</u></a> [IMO]
26 September	<a href="#"><u>International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons</u></a>
27 September	<a href="#"><u>World Tourism Day</u></a> [UNWTO]

Questions, comments, stories? Email Colleen Harmer at [newsletter@unaa-wa.org.au](mailto:newsletter@unaa-wa.org.au)