



United Nations Association of Australia WA Division

Sept/Oct 2014

UN Matters

MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT

Carolyne Gatward

Children's Week is almost upon us and if you would like to help with the flags of the world activity at the UNAAWA children's stall at Whiteman Park on **Sunday 19 October**, please contact our Vice-President Ricardo Hernandez on 0435 498 964. There are two volunteer sessions available, from 8am to 10.30am or from 10.30am to 2pm. Its a fun day with plenty of children to entertain in the beautiful park setting.

United Nations Day will be celebrated on **Thursday 23 October at 6pm** at the Constitutional Centre in West Perth. See flier details on page 2 and please let us know if you can attend. The event will include US Consul General, Cynthia Griffin as the keynote speaker as well as an address from UNAAWA Life Member and former President, Dr Jan Ryan. A representative from Penrhos College will be giving the 'Voice of Youth' speech. We are hosting this function in partnership with the Australian Institute of International Affairs (AIIA) and the Western Australian Multicultural Association (WAMA). It will be a great evening - hope you can be part of it.

We would love to see you at our Strategic Planning Session on **Saturday 25 October** from 10am-1pm at the Office. Help us plan for our future and decide on our priorities as an organisation. Drop in for all or part of the session and contribute to the discussion about what we should focus on and how we should achieve our goals for the next 3 to 4 years.

If you have any queries about the session, please contact the Office or myself (ph: 0417 459 978) for more information. Nibbles and drinks will be available - or you can bring some too!

OFFICE TO RENT?

Our lease expires at the end of January. We are looking for cheap, shared office space (an office and access to a conference/meeting room) in an accessible location. We would use the space for up to three days a week for administration, office management and evening meetings. We can contribute a modest amount towards rental costs. Please let either myself or the Office know if you are aware of any possible options e.g. NGOs who may want to share their accommodation expenses.



INSIDE THIS ISSUE

United Nations Day Event	2
Australia & the Human Rights Council	3
UN Celebrates Nobel Peace Prize Winners	4
International Day of Peace	5
News from Other Organisations	6
UN Important Dates	6



United Nations Association of Australia



UNITED NATIONS DAY 2014 CELEBRATE WITH US

You are invited to our 2014 celebration of UN Day. United Nations Day marks the anniversary of the entry into force of the UN Charter in 1945.

VENUE Constitutional Centre, 40 Havelock St, West Perth
DAY Thursday 23 October
TIME 6pm - 8pm (entry from 5.30pm)
COST Free entry
RSVP by noon on Wednesday 22 October
CONTACT 6380 7304 or office@unaa-wa.org.au or Ailsa on 0417 982 055

THE EVENT WILL INCLUDE:

- UNAAWA President, Carolyne Gatward - "Opening Address"
- Hon Professor Jan Ryan - "Australia's Role in the Creation of the UN"
- Keynote speaker US Consul General, Cynthia Griffin - "US priorities for the 69th Session of the UN General Assembly"
- The 2014 'Voice of Youth' Speech - Penrhos College
- Multicultural Performances



PARTNERS:


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United Nations Association of Australia WA Division

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UNAAWA HOSTS FORUM ON AUSTRALIA AND THE HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL



Left to Right: Anne Aly, Michael Wood, Roderic Pitty, Elizabeth Shaw, Samina Yasmeen

'The UN Human Rights Council is an intergovernmental body within the United Nations system made up of 47 States responsible for the promotion and protection of all human rights around the globe'

The UNAAWA, along with the Australian Institute of International Affairs and DFAT, hosted a forum on Australia and the Human Rights Council this month at St. Catherine's College, UWA. As the name suggests, the UN Human Rights Council is 'an inter-governmental body within the United Nations system made up of 47 States responsible for the promotion and protection of all human rights around the globe' (<http://www.ohchr.org/en/hrbodies/hrc/pages/hrcindex.aspx>).

The council was created in 2006 and deals with a wide range of issues pertaining to basic human rights. Among these issues is the assessment of the human rights situations within the 193 UN Member States. Australia underwent this Universal Period Review in 2011 and is up for another review in 2015.

Despite its temporary seat on the UN Security Council, Australia has recently received some negative attention for perceived human rights abuses within its

own borders—namely in relation to offshore processing, children in immigrant detention, the screening of asylum seekers, and the incarceration of Indigenous peoples (<http://hrlc.org.au/serious-concerns-raised-over-australias-human-rights-record-at-un/>)



The discussion at St. Catherine’s was aimed at bringing together a number of different perspectives on this and other matters in an attempt to make sense of what the HRC does, how it works, and how Australia fits into the bigger picture.

The forum was chaired by Professor Samina Yasmeen, Director of the Centre for Muslim States and Societies, University of Western Australia.

The Discussion panel included Associate Professor Roderic Pitty (Political Science and International Relations, UWA), Dr Anne Aly (Research Fellow, Curtin University), Michael Wood (WA State Director, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade), Carolyne Gatward (UNAAWA President), Elizabeth Shaw (UNAA Executive Director and UN Women President Elect), and Greg Stitt (Amnesty International—photo right).



[Colleen Harmer, Executive Member]

UN CELEBRATES AWARDING OF NOBEL PEACE PRIZE TO CHILDREN’S RIGHTS ACTIVISTS

The UN is celebrating the awarding of the Nobel Peace Prize to two champions of children’s rights, Pakistan’s Malala Yousafzai and India’s Kailash Satyarthi.

UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon praised Malala’s resilience in confronting extremists who seek to keep young girls out of school. Ms Yousafzai has become a regular presence at the UN since she was nearly killed in a targeted attack for lobbying for a girl’s right to education. In recognition of this contribution, 12 July (Ms Yousafzai’s birthday) has been dubbed by Mr Ban as ‘Malala Day’. ‘Malala is a brave and gentle advocate of peace who through the simple act of going to school became a global teacher,’ Ban Ki-moon said.



Mr Ban reserved similar accolades for Mr Satyarthi, whose ‘heroic work’ has pushed the world away from denial about child labour to ‘acknowledgement, awareness and action’.

‘Kailash Satyarthi has been at the forefront of a worldwide movement for justice, global education and a better life for millions of children trapped in exploitative child labour’, he said. UNICEF also applauded the decisions, observing that the timing is highly appropriate, given it is the 25th anniversary of the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

[UN News Centre, 10 October 2014]

UN Photos / by Mark Garten - Jenny Rockett

UNAAWA CELEBRATES 30TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE UN INTERNATIONAL DAY OF PEACE

On Sunday 21st September the UNAAWA was pleased to partner with Religions for Peace to celebrate the 30th anniversary of the UN International Day of Peace.

We were very happy to have our past President Dame Judith Parker OAM starting the proceeding with an "Acknowledgment of Country". Ester Steingiesser was the MC and she invited the UNAAWA's Vice President, Ricardo Hernandez to open his talk with a reflection on peace and its relevance in 2014. Once the formalities were over, the audience was enchanted by numerous prayers, songs and meditational chants. Memorable speeches were given by Mr Gurbachan Singh Sekhon, representing the Sikh faith; Reverend Pummy Thandi and Manita Beskow, from the Universal Brotherhood and the Young Australian of the Year 2013, Akram Azimi, who has recently returned to Perth from representing Australia on various international appointments.

One of the most memorable activities was a combined song/dance routine coordinated by Sita Rama Lakshmana Darsa, representing Hare Krishna. Besides the ecliptic

tune, they managed to get everyone in the audience on their feet and dancing.

This was the third consecutive year that Peace Day has been celebrated in Perth and gauging from the high attendance (~80 pax) this will be a continuing tradition. This event was initiated by Ester Steingiesser from UNAAWA and Eva Szauter from the Brahma Kumaris. Eva has been the main driver in recruiting people of different faiths to bring their prayers and songs for peace, creating a memorable atmosphere. We must continue to celebrate it again in the coming years.

[Ester Steingiesser, Member & Ricardo Hernandez, Vice President UNAAWA]



NEWS FROM OTHER ORGANISATIONS

Australian Red Cross—Conference

From Principles to Practice: 'Securing Compliance with the Laws of War'

The conference will gather legal, defence, academic and humanitarian experts from around Australia and overseas. Confirmed speakers include:

- The Hon Julie Bishop, Minister for Foreign Affairs
- Dr Serge Brammertz, Prosecutor of the ICTY and former Deputy Prosecutor in the ICC
- The Hon Kevin Parker, Former Judge and Vice-President of the ICTY
- Prof Tim McCormack, Professor of Law at Melbourne Law School and Special Advisor on IHL to the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court
- Dr Phoebe Wynn-Pope, new Director of IHL and Movement Relations, Australian Red Cross
- Ms Sophie Perreard, Lecturer in Humanitarian Assistance at Deakin University and humanitarian practitioner (Medecins Sans Frontieres, Norwegian Refugee Council, Save the Children)
- Mr Estanislau Guterres, Dissemination Officer, Red Cross Timor-Leste

Full conference program available from: <http://www.redcross.org.au/1900.aspx>

When: 5 & 6 November 2014 at the University Club of WA

Bookings: www.trybooking.com/FJAB

Contact: Renata at rsivacolundhu@redcross.org.au or call 08 9225 1928

24th Annual Silent Domestic Violence Memorial March

To honour all those who have lost their lives as a result of domestic & family violence.

When: 21 November 2014 at Stirling Gardens (cnr Barrack St & St Georges Tce)

Time: 10.30am Rally with speakers, 12 noon Silent March through City

For information, contact Carolyn at 9420 7264,
Women's Council for Domestic & Family Violence Services (WA)



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UN IMPORTANT DATES

OCTOBER 2014

1 October	International Day of Older Persons
2 October	International Day of Non-Violence
5 October	World Teachers' Day [UNESCO]
6 October	World Habitat Day
9 October	World Post Day
11 October	International Day of the Girl Child
13 October	International Day for Disaster Reduction
15 October	International Day of Rural Women
16 October	World Food Day [FAO]
17 October	International Day for the Eradication of Poverty
24 October	United Nations Day
24 October	World Development Information Day
27 October	World Day for Audiovisual Heritage [UNESCO]

Questions, comments, stories? Email Colleen Harmer at newsletter@unaa-wa.org.au