



**United Nations Association of Australia WA Division**

# UN Matters

Jan/Feb 2015

## MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT

Carolyn Gatward

We have moved! Our new premises is located at **4 Park Rd, Crawley**. Park Road is located behind St Catherine’s College, UWA. Our mailing address is PO Box 585 SUBIACO WA 6904. Thank you to the volunteers who helped with the cleaning, packing and moving process, including Ricky, Harvey, Curtis and Kristy.

We are partnering with Graduate Women WA for our next event, which will celebrate the World Day for Social Justice. It is being held from 7pm-8.30pm on **Friday 20 February** at our new premises that we share with Graduate Women. The two speakers will be Associate Professor Jaya Earnest from Curtin University and Professor Russell Trood, National President of UNAA. Jaya will be speaking about her research project on refugee youth and Russell will be discussing the UN and its commitment to social justice. Entry is free. For catering purposes, please RSVP to [office@unaa-wa.org.au](mailto:office@unaa-wa.org.au) or ring Ricky on 0435 498 964.

We will be celebrating the UN’s 70th birthday this year on Friday 23 October in the Governor’s Ballroom and our Patron, Her Excellency the Hon Kerry Sanderson AO, has accepted our invitation to open the event. Vice President Neesha Seth is leading the organising committee for UN Day and if you would like to be involved, please email [wavp@unaa.org.au](mailto:wavp@unaa.org.au).

In December 2015, UN member states will meet in Paris with the objective of achieving a legally binding and universal agreement on climate. Advanced negotiations between China and the USA are giving hope that this critical objective may be achieved. We will be exploring the possibilities associated with the UN 2015 Global Climate Deal during the year.

Thank you to Curtis Clark for his many years of excellent service as Human Rights Forum Convenor and Office Manager. These positions, along with Communications Officer, are now vacant. Please see the advertisement on page 8 for more details.

Plans are being finalised for the launch of the UNAAWA Women’s Committee. To find out more or to join the Women’s Committee mailing list, please email Kristy Tyrie at [womens.committee@unaa-wa.org.au](mailto:womens.committee@unaa-wa.org.au).

Welcome to our new UN Matters Team. Meet the team inside this edition on pages 7-8.



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## HOLOCAUST REMEMBRANCE DAY 2015



On Tuesday, 27<sup>th</sup> January, a memorial ceremony took place for the annual International Day of Remembrance in Memory of the Victims of the Holocaust. It was held at the Memorial Monument in Stirling Gardens in Perth, and was organized by the National Council of Jewish Women, W.A. (NCJWA) and the W.A. branch of the United Nations Association of Australia (UNAAWA) – a committed partnership for six years. Approximately 60 people gathered in Perth despite the 39 degree heat.

In 2005 the UN General Assembly passed *Resolution A/RES/60/7* and designated 27<sup>th</sup> January as the annual *International Day of Commemoration in Memory of the Victims of the Holocaust*. In Perth, the memorial ceremony began with an introductory speech by Carolyne Gatward, President of UNAAWA. Rabbi Shalom White then recited Psalm 23, *The*

*Lord is my Shepherd*, in Hebrew and English, as well as the traditional prayer for deceased persons, *El Male Rachamim*. The third speaker, Ken Arkwright OAM, gave an impassioned personal testimony. Mr. Arkwright, a Holocaust survivor, moved the gathering to tears by his powerful and heart-rending speech. He displayed his WWII Identity Card which had a huge “J” on the front (for Jew), and explained that the name ‘Israel’ as given to him by the Nazis. All personal names became irrelevant to the Nazi regime, as a way of dehumanizing their victims.

Let us renew our collective determination to never allow such a terrible passage of history to happen again. Never.

[Margaret Helfgott, NCJWA WA]



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## KOMBE MUSONDA WINS COMMUNITY AWARD

Executive member Kombe Musonda was recognised as a Community Leader at the 2014 African Australian National Awards in WA late last year. Kombe has used her passion for helping people in the areas of human rights to fuel her involvement in Amnesty International as the current WA Vice Branch President, as an executive committee member for the UNAAWA and UNAAWA YP and as a Soroptimist Club member. Congratulations, Kombe !



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## UN YOUTH TOUR REFLECTIONS— NIGARISH HYDER

*‘The Middle East is as historically symbolic as it is politically volatile, as fascinating and beautiful as it is surreally haunting, and populated with people who are as warm and welcoming as they are resilient’*



The Middle East is as historically symbolic as it is politically volatile, as fascinating and beautiful as it is surreally haunting, and populated with people who are as warm and welcoming as they are resilient. Home to some of the earliest human civilisations and the birthplace of many of the world’s oldest religions, it is a region that continues to move forward in this fast-paced world, while maintaining links to its rich past.

The theme and primary goal of the tour was to impart us with a deeper understanding of the conflicts in the area, the impacts upon individuals and rapidly expanding refugee populations, and the peace-building initiatives taking place as a result of these things. This included visits to the United Nations Development Project (UNDP) regional headquarters, a workshop with UNICEF Middle East, community-building projects with the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) and a meeting with the Australian ambassador to Jordan.



Over the summer I had the opportunity to experience these things first-hand as part of the inaugural United Nations Youth Australia (UNYA) ‘Middle East Experience’ tour. I was selected, along with eleven other young ambassadors from cities across Australia, to spend a fortnight travelling through the UAE, Israel and Jordan. Along the way I met with various United

I have had a truly life-changing experience, and the people and places I encountered along the way opened up my eyes to one of the most historically, religiously and politically relevant regions in the world. Over the course of the tour, I learnt plenty about the countries at hand, about the lives of individuals there, and about myself. Those I met inspired me to believe that we can all make a difference in the world, and I came away with many irreplaceable memories, connections and insights. I would like to extend my sincere thanks to Penrhos College and all others, family and friends, who supported me in this venture, and hope that other young people like myself continue to experience and learn from the world around them.

Nations bodies, NGOs and government institutions, as well as making lifelong friendships and connections with both the other delegates and the locals we encountered.

[Nigarish Hyder]

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## AUSTRALIA AND THE HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL



Photo from: <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=42140&Cr=NypSotz16k>

Key areas of interest to Australia include:

- Gender Equality
- Good Governance
- Freedom of Expression and Association
- Transparent working methods for HRC

Having finished its two-year term on the UN Security Council, Australia is now setting its sights on a seat on the UN's primary human rights body, the Human Rights Council, in 2018.

If elected, it will be the first time Australia has held a seat on the council. Lobbying is already underway ahead of a vote in 2017.

Key areas of interest to Australia include:

- Gender Equality: a prerequisite for development
- Good Governance: essential in promoting a positive human rights environment
- Freedom of Expression and Association: a key ingredient for democracy, development and a human rights oriented society
- Transparent working methods for the Human Rights Council: ensuring the Council is impartial, equitable and pragmatic in order to encourage clarity and predictability.

Foreign Minister Julie Bishop says Australia is a leading contender to win a seat despite harsh criticism from the UN of the government's human rights record. UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Zeid Ra'ad al Hussein, criticised Australia's asylum policies in his inaugural address to the Human Rights Council on 8 September 2014, saying that Australia's policy of off-shore processing for asylum seekers arriving by sea and its interception and turning back of vessels is 'leading to a chain of human rights violations, including arbitrary detention and possibly torture'.

Yet countries with questionable human rights records, such as Cuba, Saudi Arabia, China and Russia have previously been elected to the body.

Ms Bishop has said that Australia's bid is 'consistent with our nation's history of promoting and protecting human rights'.

[Katherine Iliopoulos]

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## AUSTRALIA AND THE SECURITY COUNCIL



Photo from: <http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/operations/>

Australia's approach to humanitarian and human rights issues during their two years on the UN Security Council has been labelled 'more proactive' and 'more effective' than previous temporary members.

Although the Rudd Government was highly criticised when it announced its decision to bid for a seat on the UN Security Council in 2008, a comprehensive review of Australia's performance recently published by the Lowy Institute's Richard Gowin describes how Australia, led by Ambassador Gary Quinlan and Foreign Minister Julie Bishop, has been one of the most influential and proac-



-tive temporary members of the UN Security Council.

Australia's positive influence saw the adoption of Resolution 2139, a collaborative proposal with Jordan and Luxembourg that called for increased humanitarian aid access in Syria and unspecified punitive action against President Bashar al-Assad's regime for human rights atrocities committed during their bloody civil war.

Previous intervention efforts were vetoed by Russia in an attempt to protect its main Middle-Eastern ally; there were also hints that future resolutions would be rejected if they were tabled in Washington, Paris or London.

But by bridging the diplomatic differences between the P5, Australia played a key role in gaining support from both Moscow and China, and the resolution was unanimously accepted on February 22, 2014.

Additionally, Julie Bishop's stand on behalf of the victims of Malaysia Airlines flight MH17 and their families garnered worldwide praise as she successfully argued for and won the adoption of Resolution 2166, demanding that Russian separatists provide safe and unrestricted access for investigators and punishment for those found responsible.

Australia's successes on the Security Council are hoped to strengthen their bid for a seat on the Human Rights.

[Susan Manwaring]

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## AUSTRALIAN OF THE YEAR SPEAKS OUT AGAINST HR ABUSES

The 2015 Australian of the Year recipient Rosie Batty reminds us that we still have a long way to go in the prevention of violence against women and children. Rosie is recognised for her efforts in campaigning against family violence following the tragic death of her son Luke at the hands of his father, and her ex-husband.

At least 1 in 3 women around the world have experienced abuse in their lifetime<sup>1</sup> and one fifth of homicide victims globally are under the age of 20<sup>2</sup>. In Australia, one woman a week is killed by a current or former partner<sup>3</sup> and Indigenous women and girls are 31 times more likely to be hospitalised due to family violence than other Australian women and girls<sup>4</sup>.

Australia's Governments and community services are currently guided by the *National Plan to Reduce Violence against Women and Children 2010-2022*. The latest action plan seeks to drive whole of community action to prevent violence, improve perpetrator interventions and reform systems and service provision<sup>5</sup>.

However achievement of the Plan's vision remains a significant challenge. The Abbot Government received criticism late last year when they reportedly stated to the UN's Committee Against Torture that domestic violence did not fall within the scope of the Convention<sup>6</sup>. More recently, the community sector and Ms Batty have spoken out in relation to the Government's budget cuts for domestic violence related services.

In a recent presentation<sup>7</sup> for the Australian Human Rights Commission, Rashida Manjoo, UN Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women also stated cuts to funding were a significant impediment. She urged all citizens to hold their States accountable for their obligation to respect, protect and fulfill human rights, including their responsibility to act with due diligence to eliminate violence against women and children.

Our Australian of the Year provides a welcome voice to the protection of the right to be safe and live free from violence.

[Melanie Chatfield]

<sup>1</sup> UN Women National Committee *Violence Against Women Fact Sheet* ([www.unwomen.org.au](http://www.unwomen.org.au))

<sup>2</sup> UN Children's Fund (UNICEF), 2014, *Hidden in plain sight: A statistical analysis of violence against children*

<sup>3</sup> Australian Institute of Criminology, 2013, *Homicide in Australia: 2008-09 to 2009-10 National Homicide Monitoring Program annual report*, Canberra.

<sup>4</sup> Productivity Commission 2011 *Overcoming Indigenous Disadvantage Key Indicators*, Canberra

<sup>5</sup> Department of Social Services 2013, *Second Action Plan - 2013-2016 Moving Ahead - of the National Plan to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children 2010 - 2022*

<sup>6</sup> United Nations Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment ([www.hrweb.org/legal/cat.html](http://www.hrweb.org/legal/cat.html))

<sup>7</sup> Australian Human Rights Commission - Rights Talk: Continuing and New Challenges in the Quest to Eliminate Violence against Women ([www.youtube.com/watch?v=NZp6Ch-Krkc](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NZp6Ch-Krkc))

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Photo from: <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/topics/sustainabledevelopmentgoals>



## SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS—A NEW GLOBAL CONTRACT

In 2000, at the largest gathering of world leaders in history, eight time-bound targets were established to create a framework for global development efforts. These Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) focused on halving world poverty by 2015.

15 years later, these goals are now celebrated as a milestone in global and national development efforts. It is widely agreed that the MDG framework has helped to build a new global partnership and that tangible progress has been achieved because of them.

This year, a new set of goals have been presented to government leaders. The new universal goals, called Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) expand and follow on from the MDGs and set out the global development agenda for the next 15 years. The SDGs present 17 goals for change. Rather than framing developing nations as the subjects of change and developed nations as the financiers of this change, the SDGs aim to delegate responsibility of specific aims to each state. The new SDGs also attempt to address root causes of poverty better by highlighting the protection of human rights and importance of sustainability.

Each of the 17 Sustainable Development goals includes a set of targets amounting to a total of 169 targets. Although the targets are said to provide clearer and more defined indicators of success, the SDGs divide opinions as some believe that there are too many goals and the targets are too complicated. The question of funding these ambitious goals will also no doubt be a topic of debate as the year progresses.

The United Nations summit for the adoption of the post-2015 development agenda will be held from 25 to 27 September 2015 in New York and convened as a high-level plenary meeting of the General Assembly.

### The First Five SDGs :

- 1) End poverty in all its forms everywhere
- 2) End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition, and promote sustainable agriculture
- 3) Ensure healthy lives and promote wellbeing for all at all ages
- 4) Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all
- 5) Achieve gender equality and empower all women and

[ Maija Ala-Kauhaluoma ]

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## MEET THE UN MATTERS TEAM



Colleen Harmer, Editor-in-Chief

Colleen is a PhD Candidate at the University of Western Australia. Her thesis, 'Civic engagement, digital media and the human-as-information: understanding the human potential for action in the digital age', attempts to establish a new understanding of what it means to be human in the digital age, one that challenges traditional power structures and allows us to consider new ways of ordering, managing and acting in the world.

Colleen is Submissions Editor for *Limina: A Journal of Historical and Cultural Studies*, is an Executive Member for the UNAAWA and a founding committee member of the UNAA Young Professionals, WA.



Maija Ala-Kauhaluoma

Maija is a graduate from the University of Western Australia, where she studied communications and political science. During her studies she found a passion for international development, which took her to work on social programs in Kenya. Currently, Maija works as a community development officer at a local government level in Perth. In 2014, Maija began her Masters degree in Development Studies at Murdoch University. In her spare time Maija is a keen supporter of Oxfam Australia and has been involved in the WA State Committee for several years assisting in fundraising and education campaigns in areas such as women's empowerment, climate change, food security and poverty. Maija believes that everyone in the world should have an equal opportunity to live without fear and make the best of who they are.



Melanie Chatfield

Melanie has been working to improve the lives of disadvantaged people for over a decade. With a background in public policy and health promotion, her experience spans issues related to disability access, improving health outcomes and increasing community participation. She has experience working with both not-for-profit and government agencies, as well as young people, people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, Aboriginal people and those living in regional and remote locations.

Melanie has a particular interest in addressing social injustice and increasing inclusion. She is an active member of Retina WA and works to promote awareness of, and support for, people with a vision impairment. She is a founding member and ambassador for the Retina Australia Youth network.

Melanie is an aspiring freelance writer and amateur photographer, and is intrigued by people and their stories. She has spent considerable time exploring the globe, is currently learning Spanish and especially loves dancing to live music.



Katherine Iliopoulos

Katherine is a lawyer specialised in human rights, criminal law and public international law. She began her career at the Office of Public Prosecutions in Victoria. After obtaining her Master of Public International Law degree from Leiden University, Netherlands, she served as legal adviser to the Defence at the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia from 2008 to 2009 and then at the Special Tribunal for Lebanon from 2011 to 2013. She was the chief writer and editor of the Crimes of War Project website ([www.crimesofwar.org](http://www.crimesofwar.org)) from 2008 to 2010. Katherine has also spent time working in human rights in the field in Central Australia and in Palestine. In addition to her native English, Katherine speaks French and Greek and is a student of Spanish. Currently, she is an International Human Rights Law Fellow at Advocates for Human Dignity, monitoring human rights in Central Africa.



Susan Manwaring

Susan is a 3rd year Curtin University student studying International Relations. Her studies involve researching inter-cultural communication, politics, governance and diplomacy. Her primary field of interest is counter-terrorism and national security. She has also completed various journalism electives including feature writing, current affairs, media law and ethics.

She has recently spent eight weeks living and traveling around China, during which time she interned at TimeOut Beijing. Susan is currently employed on a casual basis as a Court Monitor, providing recording and transcription services in the Magistrates, Supreme, Federal and Family Courts. For a full list of published content and further information please see her LinkedIn page.

## UNAAWA POSITIONS VACANT

- Seeking Expressions of Interest for the roles of Communications Officer, Office Manager and Human Rights Forum Convenor.
- Voluntary positions, working with likeminded professionals and members of the community.

### *Skills and Experience:*

Ideally, you are an experienced professional with a genuine interest in the work and ideals of the United Nations and would like to further your knowledge of international affairs, as well as extend your networks. You are well organised and able to handle outward facing enquiries, manage confidential information, and communicate effectively and in a timely manner. A background in human rights, international affairs, law or management would be highly desirable.



Position	Responsibilities
Communications Officer	Supplies regular event information to members, maintains the marketing list, designs and develops campaigns to promote the Association. Uses approved social media channels to educate the community and to promote ideas and events. Assists with the development of print media (posters, brochures, leaflets, etc) for Executive approval.
Office Manager	Provides advice about the Association's activities. Manages the general administrative duties of the office, including word processing, record management, room and event bookings, dealing with mail and the purchase of office supplies and petty cash. Responds to or directs email and telephone communications on a wide variety of topics. Oversees and assists the office volunteers
Human Rights Forum Convener	Facilitates the involvement of members in discussing human rights events/activities they have participated in. Also enables the study of the UN human rights conventions, protocols and principles that can form the framework for advocacy and action for issues such as refugees, the homeless, people with mental illnesses and victims of domestic violence.

What we look for:

- Qualifications or demonstrated professional experience in the portfolio you are applying for.
- Skills in advocacy, negotiation and team work.
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills.
- Personal attributes of openness, honesty and integrity.

*Does this sound like you?*

To apply, please forward your current resume and cover letter, addressing the key points listed under 'what are we looking for' to wavp2@unaa.org.au.

Confidential queries can be submitted to Ricardo Hernandez, Vice President, UNAAWA via the above email address.

Expressions of interest close **13<sup>th</sup> March 2015.**



**Be connected. Follow us!**  
**FACEBOOK:**  
**United Nations Association of Australia WA Inc**  
**TWITTER: @UNAANA**



## UN OBSERVANCES

### MARCH 2014

1 March	<a href="#">Zero Discrimination Day [UNAIDS]</a>
3 March	<a href="#">World Wildlife Day</a>
8 March	<a href="#">International Women's Day</a>
20 March	<a href="#">International Day of Happiness</a>
21 March	<a href="#">International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination</a>
21 March	<a href="#">World Poetry Day [UNESCO]</a>
21 March	<a href="#">International Day of Nowruz</a>
21 March	<a href="#">World Down Syndrome Day</a>
21 March	<a href="#">International Day of Forests and the Tree</a>
22 March	<a href="#">World Water Day</a>
23 March	<a href="#">World Meteorological Day [WMO]</a>
24 March	<a href="#">World Tuberculosis Day [WHO]</a>
24 March	<a href="#">International Day for the Right to the Truth concerning Gross Human Rights Violations and for the Dignity of Victims</a>
25 March	<a href="#">International Day of Remembrance of the Victims of Slavery and the Transatlantic Slave Trade</a>
25 March	<a href="#">International Day of Solidarity with Detained and Missing Staff Members</a>