

Dear Members,

Your positive feedback on our last newsletter is appreciated. We welcome your further suggestions on how it can be improved.

Our feature in this edition is on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). There is a mixed report card in progressing the SDGs around the world and there are great expectations on donor countries like Australia to enhance their contributions and maximise their strategic importance in the region to advocate a more consistent implementation.

I encourage all members to give their full support to a range of upcoming events being organised by the Committee and to promote them and [membership of the UNAA](#) to your networks. Every effort is being made to provide a variety of activities that might appeal to the diverse membership base in the ACT Division. Ideas for events and feedback is encouraged.

Lastly, during the last couple of weeks I have given some presentations to ANU students and graduates on the role of the UNAA and how to maximise career opportunities in the United Nations. I am keen to work with UN Youth and the UN Young Professionals in how we might provide a regular platform for delivering sessions on career advice from current and past UN staff. There was also a lot of interest in internships and volunteerism in the UNAA and the Committee is further developing our website to encourage applications.

Till next time,

Brian Gleeson,
President, UNAA ACT

We welcome your feedback on the newsletter and any suggestions for future activities.
Email act@unaa.org.au

Upcoming Events:

Fearless Leaders: Speed Mentoring Night for Young Professionals

27 August, Tuesday, 18:00 to 20:45, [buy tickets](#)

Tower B, 7 London Circuit

Visit by Andreas Bummel, Director of Democracy without Borders, and the global coordinator of the Campaign for a UN Parliamentary Assembly

3 September, Tuesday 17:00 to 18:00, public lecture

Lecture Theatre No 1, Hedley Bull Building ANU

5 September, Thursday 09:30 to 13:00, symposium themed "Building a More Democratic United Nations"

Crawford School, ANU

6 September, Friday, 18:00 till late, reception in honour of Andreas Bummel

The National Press Club

All these events are free for UNAA members, UN YPs and UN Youth and no RSVP is necessary.

Tecber Ahmed Saleh Western Sahara Refugee presentation and discussion

17 September Tuesday, 18:00 to 19.30,
Fellows Road Hall ANU in partnership with the ANU Law School
RSVP details to be advised

International Day of Peace lecture by John Langmore "Independent Foreign Policy and the National Interest"

24 September, Tuesday, 18:00 to 20:00,
ACT Legislative Assembly
RSVP details to be advised

Address to UNAA on Pacific Step up by the Head of the Office of the Pacific, Ewen McDonald

16 October, Wednesday, 18:30 to 20:00,
ACT Legislative Assembly
RSVP details to be advised

United Nations Day

24 October, 2019,
Location and RSVP details to be advised

Asia and Pacific on course to miss all Sustainable Development Goals

Unless progress is accelerated, Asia and the Pacific are on course to miss all of the 17 Goals of the UN's 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, according to the Executive Secretary of the UN regional commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP).

ESCAP's latest [Sustainable Development Goals Progress Report](#) shows that, when it comes to some of the [Goals](#), the region is actually going backwards. These are the goals related to access to clean water and sanitation (Goal 6), decent work and economic growth (Goal 8), and responsible consumption and production (Goal 11).

In a different [report](#) by the UN Sustainable Development Solutions Network (SDSN) Australia's performance was ranked as 38th out of 162 countries in terms of progress achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Australia ranked lower than most other OECD nations including New Zealand (11), the UK (12) and Canada (22).

Monash University Professor John Thwaites, who is chair of SDSN for Australia, [said](#) this ranking should be a wake-up call showing Australia needed to make big improvements in fairness and sustainability.

Based on trend data available, Australia – along with every other country – is not on track for achieving the SDGs by the UN's target date of 2030.

The UNAA is deeply committed to the education, inspiration, and engagement of Australians around the SDGs and has a clear mandate to increase the Australian support needed to help create a safer, fairer and more sustainable world.

If you would you like to develop and support SDGs related projects in the ACT contact Brian on act@unaa.org.au

‘Preserve, revitalise and promote’ indigenous languages, or lose a ‘wealth of traditional knowledge’, UN chief says

Secretary-General António Guterres underscored the urgency to “preserve, revitalise and promote indigenous languages” in his [message](#) for the [International Day of the World’s Indigenous Peoples](#).

Noting that a significant proportion of the estimated 370 million indigenous people in the world today “still lack basic rights, with systematic discrimination and exclusion continuing to threaten ways of life, cultures and identities”, the UN chief stressed that this contradicts the UN [Declaration](#) on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and the [2030 Agenda](#) for Sustainable Development, “with its promise to leave no one behind”.

Offering the UN’s support to realize “the rights and aspirations of indigenous peoples”, the Secretary-General concluded: “I count on Member States to engage and support indigenous peoples in determining their own development through policies that are inclusive, equitable and accessible”.

Aid, Populism and Foreign Policy - address by Marc Purcell, CEO, ACFID

As part of UNAA's distinguished lecture series, earlier this May members had the pleasure to hear firsthand from Marc Purcell on the state of the Australian aid program and his prognosis for the coming years.

Marc is the CEO of the Australian Council for International Development, the peak-body for international aid and development NGOs which brings together over 130 members working in 90 developing countries.

In his wide ranging lecture he set out the important role of foreign aid in Australia's relationships and influence, the development assistance positions of the major political parties, and how the public opinion differs from current foreign aid policy settings.

Following the lecture, members had a rare opportunity to take part in a candid question and answer session and gain further insights from Marc into the state of Australia's development sector and its current engagement with the Australian Government and regional partners.

Further lectures are being planned across the year so keep an eye on your inbox for invitations. If you have ideas or requests for speakers to take part in our distinguished lecture series do not hesitate to contact Brian or the Committee on act@unaa.org.au

Welcome to our new members!

We now have 73 members of the association in the ACT. We are going from strength to strength. We're encouraging all members to invite one other person to [join the UNAA](#). Our membership should be over 100 members. All of us can help to achieve this!