

Future challenges

Is the UN equipped to meet them?

Energy security

Nuclear attack

Terrorism

Economic collapse

Climate change

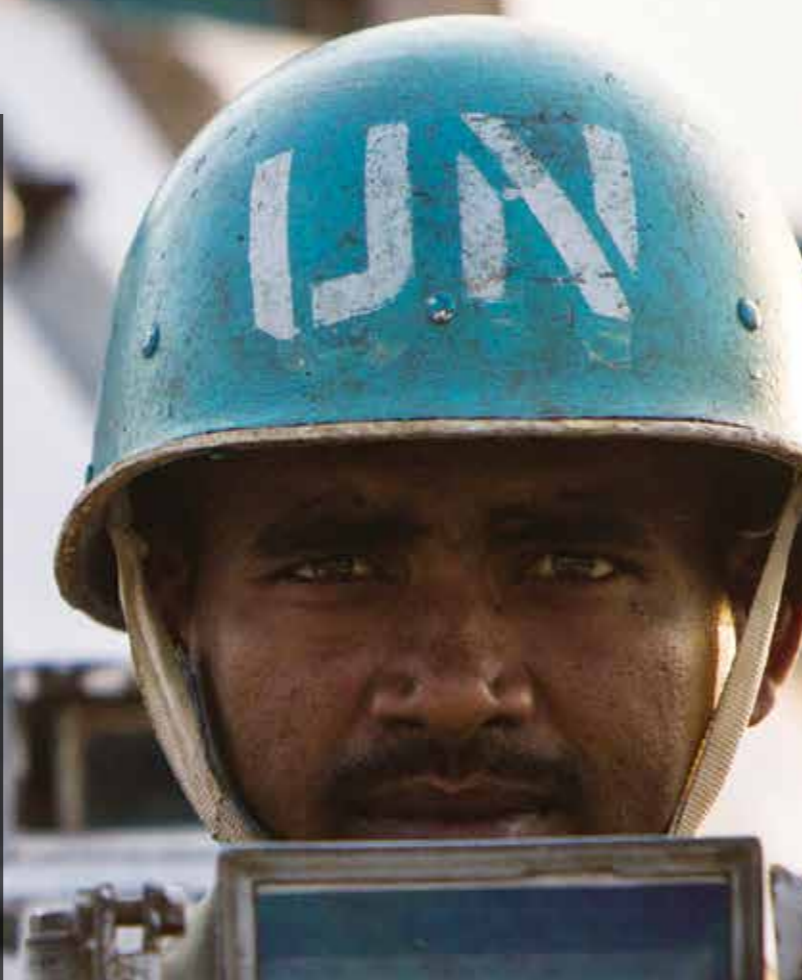
Resource scarcity

Other

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- Connect people in the UK and beyond with the work and values of the UN
- Influence decision-makers and opinion-shapers to promote UN goals
- Stimulate debate and action on ways to make the UN more effective



A peacekeeper serving with the Indian military contingent of the UN Mission in South Sudan during a drill in Piilor, Jonglei State © UN Photo/Martine Perret



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An eye to the future

Hayley Richardson on emerging trends and challenges

This issue of *New World* seeks to explore the trends and challenges which look set to feature on the UN's agenda in the coming years. For many, the need to know what is just around the corner is an instinctive part of human nature. There is even a career in it: futurologists offer predictions on anything from financial markets to the next must-have technology.

In the world of global politics and diplomacy it would seem especially foolhardy not to pay heed to emerging trends. Decision-makers have at their disposal a multitude of think tanks and research centres producing high-quality analysis, or in business jargon, "thought-leadership", on a range of issues.

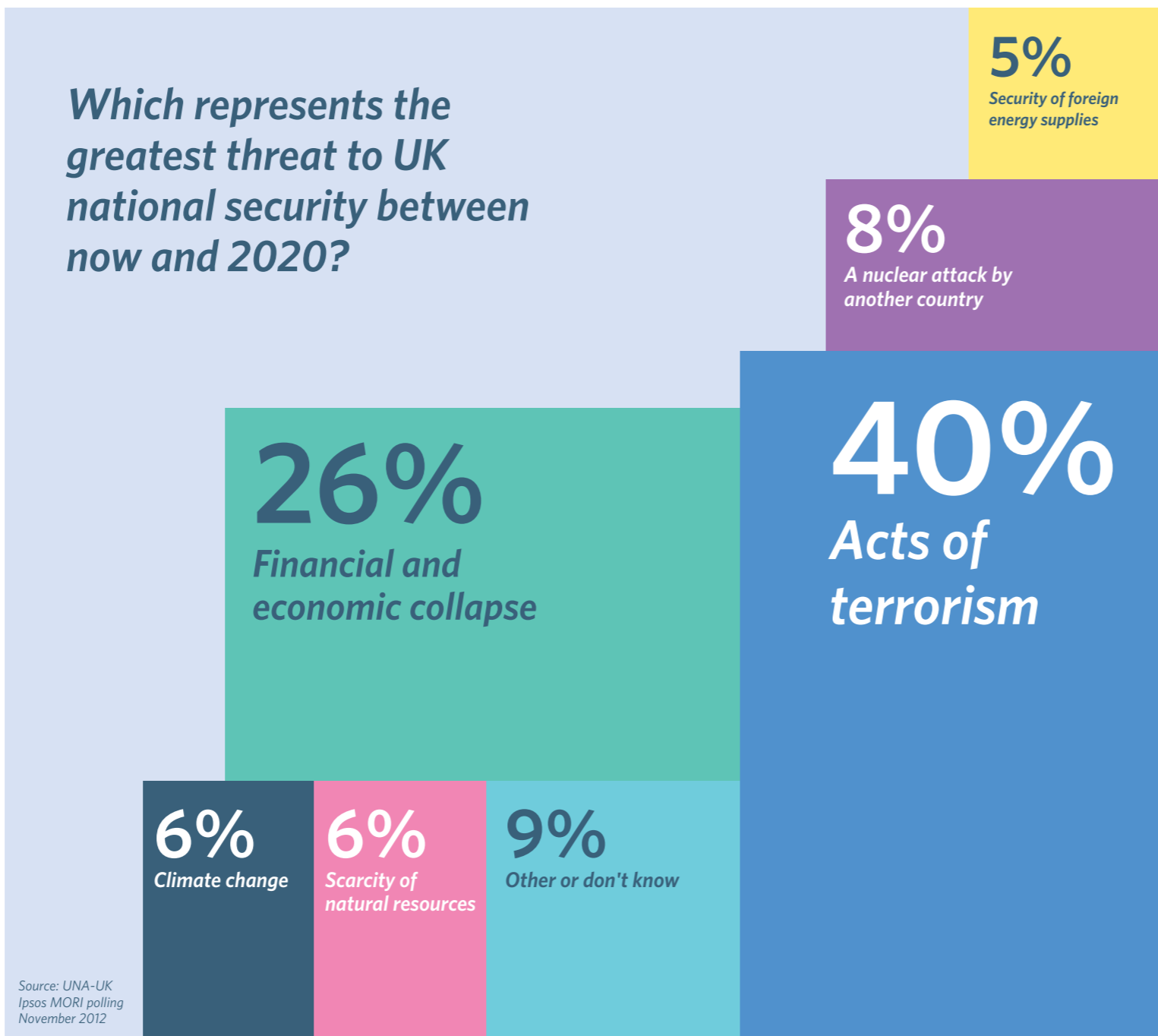
It is vital that Security Council members are well-informed and able to employ preventative diplomacy

Despite this widely available (for some) mass of information, when occupied with the day's most pressing problems, it can be challenging for even the most forward-looking among us to see past the concerns of the here and now.

At the UN Security Council – which, as Sir Jeremy sets out opposite, has until recently seemed paralysed over Syria – it is vital that members are well-informed and able to use preventative diplomacy. In 2010, the UK instigated horizon-scanning briefings, given to the Council by the UN's Department of Political Affairs. A range of concerns have been raised with the Council in this manner, with recent examples including the instability in Mali and piracy in the Gulf of Guinea.

UNA-UK is similarly concerned with spotting trends. Late last year, we commissioned pollsters Ipsos MORI to survey the UK public on what they thought represents the greatest threat to national security between now and 2020. The results, as presented on the cover and

Which represents the greatest threat to UK national security between now and 2020?



Source: UNA-UK Ipsos MORI polling November 2012

these pages, saw an act of terrorism and financial or economic collapse top the list of concerns, together accounting for two-thirds of responses (for more polling results, see page 18).

A host of other possible future challenges feature on the following pages: Jim Norton ventures into the relatively new realm of internet governance and cyber security (page 8), Chris Roles assesses the prospects for a new UN convention on the rights of older persons (page 9) and UNA-UK member Michael Harwood asks whether UN peacekeeping has entered a new, more forceful era (page 24).

And as the international community plans for a successor to the Millennium Development Goals, pages 13–15 of *New World* take a closer look at this UN-led process, with Joanna Wheeler explaining

why a post-2015 development framework must be shaped by the people who will be most affected by it.

As Jeffrey Laurenti observes in his essay on page 10, what these issues have in common is that in tackling them, it is to the UN that the world inevitably turns for direction. Whether acting as a forum for innovation, the depository for international treaties or the source of world opinion, the UN is uniquely placed to shape and influence events.

As United Nations Day approaches, these global concerns are a valuable reminder for UNA-UK members and supporters that only a properly equipped, credible and effective UN will be able to meet these future challenges. See pages 17 and 22 for how you can show your support for this "indispensable institution". ●

New World online

UNA-UK now has a dedicated mini-site featuring all the content from the print issue as well as a host of web-exclusive articles and opportunities for readers to engage with us.

W Web content is flagged in the magazine with this symbol.

As always, we welcome your thoughts, comments and suggestions. Email the editor at richardson@una.org.uk

New World – required reading for global citizens from all walks of life.

www.una.org.uk/magazine



Syria: what comes next?

Sir Jeremy Greenstock, UNA-UK Chairman, on recent developments in the Middle East

Something happened in the Syrian tragedy in the late weeks of summer which seems to have changed the situation in fundamental ways. What have we learnt from it, and who has gained?

Certainly not the Syrian people, for a start. The relief over the avoidance of a US bombing campaign, and the focus that followed on the chemical weapons issue, has shamefully not been matched in media comment and in government action by insistence on steps to ease the pain of civilian victims of conflict, brutality and chaos. UNA-UK lobbied hard to generate fresh momentum for UN action, which appeared in the form of a Security Council Presidential Statement in late September. Distressingly, too, the opposition has attracted growing numbers of foreign fighters whose motives and behaviour are far from serving the vast majority of Syrian nationals.

Nor have Western governments covered themselves with laurels. Prime Minister Cameron's defeat in the House of Commons brought back memories of Tony Blair's misreading of, or lack of interest in, the British public's distaste for the use of force in poorly explained circumstances. The on-off threatening of US military punishment – 'a pinprick, but make no mistake, it will hurt' – dented President Obama's credibility, too. The French president found himself beached. Even the Russians, who had a good tactical day when they converted an American hint into a compelling UN-based proposal and produced Assad's signature on the Chemical Weapons Convention, have been left appearing to protect a mass murderer.

Yet people are talking to each other. After Kosovo, Afghanistan, Iraq and Libya all produced the bombers, it is beginning to sink in that dialogue with antagonists carries fewer risks than loosing off high explosives. Attacking Syria in the teeth of Russian and Iranian opposition – plus plenty of criticism from the democratic world – would inevitably have made the business of delivering

Syria from its political mess a huge amount harder. Treating both of them as potential stakeholders in other Middle East solutions, which they could be, will be riddled with awkwardnesses but also full of possibilities. Benyamin Netanyahu, in asking the Israeli delegation to walk out of President Rouhani's speech at the recent UN General Assembly, all too clearly showed himself on the wrong side of this trend.

Syria is about the confused politics of an artificial territory created a century ago by imperial minds

Things are rarely what protagonists say they are. Syria is about the confused politics of an artificial territory created a century ago by imperial minds, only controllable by force because the people's identities and interests are not reflected in the make-up of the state. Iran is about the security arrangements of the Gulf region, over-managed and poorly handled by the West, and about the long-term aspirations of the Iranian people, most of whom would be happy to move on from their clerical oppressors and re-connect with the world economy. Palestine is about injustice and broken promises, with those responsible for them refusing to accept accountability. In each of these inflammable situations, the last few weeks have seen stakeholders pausing to think and reaching for new approaches.

As to what comes next, we will see. The Geneva Conference on Syria scheduled for November has big challenges to face. The record of diplomacy so far in this century has been unimpressive. But if we – and our judgmental media – give leaders a bit of room to change course, and if they start talking to each other seriously, we might find a silver lining from the dark clouds hanging over Syria. ●

● **World leaders gather in New York**

September saw the opening of the 68th session of the UN General Assembly. Recent events in Syria dominated the annual general debate, with heads of state from around the globe calling for urgent action to resolve the conflict and address the humanitarian crisis. With two years to go before the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) expire, international development also featured highly on the agenda and several other global concerns were addressed.

As is traditional, Brazil opened the debate. President Rousseff used her speech to urge the UN to play a greater role in online privacy and protection. Norway expressed concern at the UN's decreased regular budget but increased activity, calling it "a recipe for a weaker, not a stronger UN". And Iran's new president, Hassan Rouhani, attracted attention by announcing that Iran "is prepared to engage immediately in time-bound and result-oriented talks" on its nuclear programme.

On the sidelines of the debate, there was much celebration as 18 countries – including the US, the world's largest arms exporter – signed the Arms Trade Treaty. This now takes the number of signatories of this landmark agreement to more than half of all UN member states. There was also a Special Event on the MDGs at which states agreed to scale up efforts to meet the targets and called for a 2015 summit to adopt a new set of goals.

W For more information on the Arms Trade Treaty signings, and a web exclusive on the Special Event on the MDGs, visit www.una.org.uk

● **Chemical weapons use confirmed in Syria**

UN chemical weapons inspectors have confirmed Sarin gas was used in an incident on 21 August in which over 1,000 people were reportedly killed. UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon described the presented evidence as "overwhelming and indisputable". However, the report stopped short of assigning responsibility for the attack.



Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon visits the Langjökull Glacier, Iceland, in July 2013. The glacier has retreated considerably in the last few decades due to warmer temperatures © UN Photo/Eskinder Debebe

UNA-UK welcomed subsequent proposals to place Syria's chemical weapons under international control. The weapons inspection team has since arrived in Syria to begin its work eliminating the weapons.

W For further updates on Syria visit www.una.org.uk

● **Unrest in DR Congo**

The UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) is seeking an additional \$21m to provide assistance to the latest influx of refugees to Uganda, who are fleeing renewed unrest in eastern Democratic Republic of Congo. Since July, outbreaks of violence have forced many to flee their homes, including 80,000 in the past month alone. To date, just 28 per cent of UNHCR's total appeal for this crisis has been met. Both the Security Council and the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General to the Great Lakes Region, Mary Robinson, have made recent on-the-ground visits to support the ongoing peace talks taking place in Kampala.



Global wheat production reaches record high

705M TONNES
in 2013

+7%
from 2012

Source: Food and Agriculture Organization

● **Human rights chief visits Sri Lanka**

In August, UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Navi Pillay conducted a week-long visit to Sri Lanka, her longest official visit to a single country. In a press statement, Ms Pillay noted a number of human rights concerns, and remarked that "although the fighting is over, the suffering is not". During her visit the High Commissioner had access to both government officials and civil society groups, and visited former war zones in

the north of the country. She presented the findings of her trip to the UN Human Rights Council in September.

● **Progress made in fight against HIV**

A new report from the Joint UN Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) has stated that, over the past decade, the rate of new HIV infections fell by one-third. UNAIDS also announced that there has been a 30 per cent drop in AIDS-related deaths. These reductions were partly attributed to increased national prevention funding as well as greater access to antiretroviral treatment. Coinciding with the release of the report, the UK government announced it would be increasing its commitment to the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, pledging £1bn over the next three years.

● **Civilians at risk in Central African Republic**

Chaloka Beyani, the UN's Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights of Internally Displaced Persons, has called

for urgent action to protect the civilian population in the Central African Republic (CAR). The country has experienced considerable turmoil in recent months, including the capture of the capital by the Seleka rebel group in March. As a result, more than 260,000 people are thought to have been internally displaced, with the majority lacking access to basic services. The World Food Programme recently announced it is scaling up its relief programme in the CAR.

● **UN climate change report released**

The UN's Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) has released its latest report, which states that the Panel is 95 per cent sure that human influence has been the dominant factor in global warming. The report predicts that, as a result of rising temperatures, heat waves and other extreme weather patterns will become more frequent, and notes that, in line with the trend of recent years, Arctic sea ice cover will continue to shrink. The IPCC's fifth assessment report received input from more than 800 contributors and cites 9,200 scientific publications.

In September, UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon announced that a climate summit will be held at the opening of the General Assembly in 2014.

W Visit www.una.org.uk/magazine for a web exclusive on security in the Arctic

● **Inquiry on North Korea begins**

The Commission of Inquiry on Human Rights in North Korea has held its first public hearings. Established by the UN Human Rights Council in March this year, the Commission is mandated to investigate systematic, widespread and grave violations of human rights in North Korea. To date, hearings have been held in South Korea and Japan, as the North Korean government has yet to respond to the Commission's request for an official visit. Chairman Michael Kirby, said that Commission members had been "deeply moved" by the testimonies they had received, which collectively "call for a response from the international community".

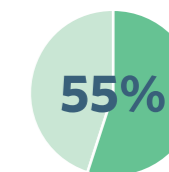
Syria in numbers



One-third of the Syrian population has been displaced

2 MILLION CHILDREN

have left education in the last academic year



of the humanitarian appeal is still unfunded

4 MILLION PEOPLE

inside Syria are in need of emergency food aid

Source: UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs



*Will the internet be dominated by cyber swords or cyber ploughshares? **Jim Norton** explores global digital security challenges*

The biblical decree from Old Testament prophet Isaiah, “and they shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning hooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more”, will be very familiar to those in the UN family. It is echoed by a statue in the UN garden in New York, donated by the Soviet Union in 1959. How, though, might this mighty dictum be applied in the modern day and to the burgeoning realm of cyberspace?

The growth of the internet continues to transform both social and economic structures around the globe. Extensive research has amply demonstrated the positive economic impacts. The dramatic growth in social networks has built new online communities with a welcome disregard for geographic distance. However, such tools can be put to many uses, both welcome and unwelcome. The so-called “dark markets” – forums operated on the internet by organised crime – exemplify this negative dimension.

It should hardly be a surprise that nations see cyberspace both as a critical new area for intelligence gathering, building on a long history of electronic surveillance; and as a new field of warfare that at some level avoids the political and logistical challenges of boots on the ground. Recent examples of cyber-attacks include the major hits on Estonia in 2007, attributed to, but denied by, Russia, and the Stuxnet worm attack on Iranian nuclear facilities, which has been attributed jointly to the US and Israel. While these developments have occurred quickly, international treaty making bodies, which by their very nature move slowly, have yet to catch up. This mismatch is becoming increasingly dangerous.

Over many years, states and state agencies have developed a clear understanding of which physical threats were considered acceptable, and which would bring a swift and damaging response. Thus some (largely unwritten) rules of the game came to be generally accepted. No such norms are yet accepted in cyberspace. Under what circumstances

are offensive cyber operations justified? When might it be legitimate to respond to cyber-attack with conventional weapons and forces? What level of civilian death and injury stemming from a cyber-attack might constitute a war crime?

Since its origins, governance of the internet has been deliberately minimal. The vital management of internet naming and addressing has always been handled through the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers, under contract from the US Department of Commerce. This US role is likely to come under increased pressure following recent revelations about the country’s global surveillance programmes. Yet there are also those states who would like to throttle the freedoms of the internet, severely limiting access by their populations to uncensored information. One example here is the “Great Firewall of China”, which the Chinese authorities use to exert strong controls over content deemed to be undesirable. The way forward therefore remains fraught.

The UN has made tentative moves in this arena. The World Summit on the Information Society, held in 2003 and 2005, and organised by the International Telecommunication Union, was followed by the United Nations Group on the Information Society. These have sought a way forward on areas such as governance of the internet. General Assembly Resolution 66/24 set up a Group of Governmental Experts on Developments in the Field of Information and Telecommunications in the Context of International Security. Its report, published in June 2013, is a useful step forward but largely neglected the thorny issues around impact on individuals’ privacy and human rights.

Other multilateral organisations have also been active in this area in recent months. NATO, for example, held an International Conference on Cyber Conflict in Tallinn in June as well as a Seminar on the International Law of Cyber Operations in September. And in February the European Commission and the High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security



The sculpture Let Us Beat Our Swords into Ploughshares was presented to the United Nations on 4 December 1959 by the USSR © UN Photo/Andrea Brizzi

Policy published its first comprehensive Cyber Security Strategy.

It is imperative that new rules defining acceptable (and unacceptable) behaviour in cyberspace are developed for the common good, based on the achievement of a broad consensus. The UN is the obvious starting point, but if it fails to rise fully to the challenge, new multilateral bodies will need to step in. The long-term impact on the UN’s credibility if this occurs is incalculable. One thing is clear – we will not be able to continue to enjoy the fruits of the cyber ploughshares if we cannot develop credible frameworks to constrain the cyber swords. ●

Professor Jim Norton is a Fellow of the UK Royal Academy of Engineering and former President of BCS, The Chartered Institute for IT. He was a member of the Institute for Public Policy Research’s Commission on National Security in the 21st Century



*Making human rights ageless: **Chris Roles** on working towards a convention on the rights of older persons*

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) has helped establish a legal framework and culture of respect for human rights that has influenced relations between individuals, groups and governments worldwide. There are few that would deny the universality of these principles, yet putting them into practice challenges us continuously.

In 1948, it would have been difficult to imagine that by 2030, there would be more people over the age of 60 than children under 10. This unprecedented demographic shift reflects successes in reducing poverty and medical advances leading to much greater longevity, as well as decreasing birth rates. Older people are also able to make substantial contributions to their families, communities and the economy for much longer than was the case in the past.

With increased longevity, however, come new challenges: age discrimination, age-related diseases and dementia, poor health and social care, lack of financial and physical security, isolation, and increased frailty and vulnerability. Given that soon 20 per cent of the world’s population will be over the age of 60, we need to put in the work now to make sure that our human rights protection is fit for purpose.

However, this is where the wisdom of the drafters of the UDHR fell short. The Declaration and almost all subsequent human rights treaties simply do not

recognise the specific experience of ageing. Older people’s concerns tend to fall under the catch-all “other status” category. This means that there is no global legal mandate not to discriminate on the basis of age; in practice, the human rights protections that should apply to people at all stages of their life are often forgotten where older people are concerned.

So what can be done? The international human rights system has evolved greatly since 1948 as UN member states have adopted conventions on the rights of women, children and people living with disabilities. These have made a huge impact on the lives of millions of people by providing greater clarity as to what human rights mean for specific groups, establishing global legal standards and providing a framework for more effective engagement between citizens and their governments. This experience has shown us that a convention is the best proven method for establishing universal legally binding human rights protection.

But the path to a convention is a long one and involves a process rather than a single decision. To have any resonance and force, a convention must be agreed and ratified by the largest number of member states, but it only really becomes meaningful when implemented at the national level. The process also requires the active involvement of civil society and older people themselves. This is

essential for three reasons: 1) governments will not make a convention a political priority unless they think this is what their population wants; 2) the content of a convention must be informed by the day-to-day lived realities of older people; and 3) ensuring a global standard is implemented on a national level requires engagement between civil society and their governments.

It is encouraging, then, that the UN General Assembly set up an Open-ended Working Group on Ageing (OEWG) for the purpose of strengthening the protection of the rights of older persons. This provides a unique forum for governments and civil society as we collectively seek to address the issues that arise from an ageing global population. The fourth meeting of the OEWG took place in August and it is clear that all participating member states agree something must be done. There are great divisions within the room, however, as to whether a new convention is the solution or whether we simply need to use what instruments we have more effectively.

Given that the process depends on building consensus among member states, each of which has its own national interests in mind, it can be difficult to know how far we are on the path towards a convention. The process though has built greater understanding of the problem, which will, it is to be hoped, result in better policies. Protecting the rights of older people, however, does not mean simply waiting for a final decision on a convention. We must use every mechanism and tool available to build awareness and improve implementation of existing human rights standards while looking to the future. The lives of older people literally depend on it. ●

Chris Roles is Director of Age International, a charitable subsidiary of Age UK, the UK’s leading organisation focusing on the needs of older people



A group of elderly persons in Gyeong-Ju, South Korea © UN Photo/Hanns Maier

Once again, the indispensable institution

Jeffrey Laurenti looks at the UN's role as a vital, if imperfect, forum for change



Jeffrey Laurenti, previously Director of Policy Studies at the United Nations Association of the United States and of foreign policy programs at The Century Foundation, is board chair of his local UNA chapter in New Jersey's Princeton/Trenton area

The recent crisis over Syria seemed once again to spotlight United Nations fecklessness and irrelevance. Even the US president, who won the 2009 Nobel Peace Prize for his “emphasis on the role that the United Nations and other international institutions can play”, dismissed Security Council resolutions as “hocus pocus”.

Then a funny thing happened. Plans for a UN bypass crumbled in the face of public resistance in each of the Security Council's three Western permanent members. The House of Commons derailed UK government plans to join military action, Barack Obama found himself stymied by intense public and Congressional opposition and François Hollande declared that France wanted to wait for the UN weapons inspectors' report after all. Then Russia offered a proposal for the UN control and destruction of Syria's chemical weapons stockpiles that seemed to offer a solution – ironically, a UN solution.

In short, the United Nations, like a Japanese daruma doll, keeps popping back up even after it is supposedly knocked down for good – whether over Bosnia, Kosovo,

Iraq, or now Syria. For all its infirmities and limitations, it remains the world's indispensable institution.

Despite the political gridlock, which can afflict both the UN and its member states, the organisation has become a principal arena for nurturing and building momentum for cutting-edge thinking on the issues of the future. From acting as a catalyst for decolonisation in the 1950s and 1960s (see box on page 12) to its midwifing of a broad corpus of international human rights law, the UN has often been at the forefront of such progress.

Whether we talk about peace and security or about climate and development or about human rights and democracy, the United Nations is uniquely capable of assembling worldwide talent to reflect on coming challenges and to identify prospective pathways for dealing with them. UN bodies respond to these international experts' ideas and launch them globally in ways that can entice international political support.

This is true even in the politically charged arena of peace and security. National security establishments that grew up in the Cold War have adapted relatively slowly



The Secretariat building is surrounded with scaffolding as part of the ongoing renovation of the UN Headquarters

© UN Photo/Rick Bajornas

to the new reality that political violence and war have become almost entirely intrastate and require intrastate political solutions; yet this has become a core UN mission. UN innovations in peacekeeping have created a vastly improved post-conflict intervention capacity and institutionalised peacebuilding. The outcomes achieved by countries engaging on their own in overseas nation-building, especially in conjunction with counterinsurgency campaigns, are illuminating by comparison.

Given major-power indifference to African political conflict since Somalia in 1993, it has been left to the UN to develop peacekeeping formulas on that continent that increasingly trespass into use of force. Often in concert with the African Union or subregional organisations, UN-backed missions in Darfur, Côte d'Ivoire and Somalia have pushed the peacekeeping envelope toward episodic coercion. 2013 has seen a continuation of this pattern, and indeed has proved a watershed year in this regard, with a new “intervention brigade” in the Democratic Republic of Congo and a force deployment in Mali intended to secure its newly restored democratic

regime from Islamist insurgents' assaults. The organisation has improvised low-cost solutions in Africa free of major powers' heavy-handed interference. Some of these solutions will surely prove replicable in confronting societal meltdowns in other regions in the years ahead.

The UN system has also been in the vanguard on the development of legal constraints on the conduct of war and of accountability for their violation. Efforts launched through its bodies have created powerful momentum to circumscribe whole categories of weaponry – chemical and biological weapons, testing of nuclear weapons (with modest progress toward their rollback), and on land mines, depleted uranium and cluster munitions. These initiatives have not usually originated in the defence ministries that possess these weapons, but in diplomatic and civil society circles working the corridors and press rooms of the UN.

Furthermore, the establishment of the International Criminal Court stands as a truly historic achievement for the UN. The legal accountability that it was intended to provide is proving such an effective deterrent that the >>

UN MILESTONES

1945
Founding of the United Nations

1946
General Assembly meets in Central Hall, Westminster

1948
First peacekeeping operation established and Universal Declaration of Human Rights adopted

1954
UN High Commissioner for Refugees wins first of two Nobel Peace Prizes

1960
17 newly independent states become UN members

1965
Non-permanent seats on Security Council enlarged from six to ten

1970
Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons Treaty comes into force

1972
UN Environment Programme established

1979
UN adopts Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women

1980
World Health Organisation declares smallpox eradicated

1984
Convention Against Torture adopted



A United Nations Trusteehip Mission visits British Cameroon in 1949 © UN Photo

The UN and decolonisation

Over the course of the UN's history, more than 80 former colonies from all over the world gained their independence. 11 of these were placed under the care of the UN's Trusteehip Council, a principal organ created under the UN Charter which oversaw the process of self-determination in these countries. Though the Trusteehip Council suspended operations in 1994, the UN still monitors the situation in the world's 17 remaining non-self-governing territories (10 of which are administered by the UK):

- American Samoa
- Anguilla
- Bermuda
- British Virgin Islands
- Cayman Islands
- Falkland Islands
- French Polynesia
- Gibraltar
- Guam
- Montserrat
- New Caledonia
- Pitcairn
- St. Helena
- Tokelau
- Turks and Caicos Islands
- United States Virgin Islands
- Western Sahara

>> Security Council increasingly refers egregious cases to the court's jurisdiction, including the Libyan referral in 2011, which even Russia and China supported. A referral of the allegations relating to chemical weapons use in Syria would help the Court break out of what some criticise as its African ghetto.

The United Nations is also at the centre of efforts to subdue another global threat of enormous consequence, the politics of which are, at times, equally paralysed: global warming. The UN's Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change is the planet's most authoritative source of information about the intensifying crisis, prodding

political leaders to action. However, near-unanimity among major greenhouse gas emitters is required, and it remains difficult to achieve. Much hinges on changing calculations in China and the US. President Obama has turned US policy around from the outright denial of his predecessor's years, but we cannot assume a similar attitude from his successor after 2016. Perhaps the danger of China's self-asphyxiation through its own coal emissions will help break the logjam in time.

Climate flickered faintly on the agenda of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) that heads of government promulgated at the United Nations at the start of this century. In contrast to the usual UN

The United Nations is also at the centre of efforts to subdue another global threat of enormous consequence, the politics of which are, at times, equally paralysed: global warming

global conferences listing scores of goals that they could never prioritise (and rarely remember), assembled world leaders agreed to Secretary-General Kofi Annan's eight-goal distillation of the Millennium Summit declaration. While rates of progress vary in different regions, the majority of countries that have not descended into chronic armed conflict now seem within reach of realising most of these goals.

The UN's MDG checklist has undeniably focused global action on development by developing country governments and by international aid agencies. Need one say that the concerted action to reduce child mortality by two-thirds, halve dire poverty and achieve universal primary education would scarcely have happened without the UN acting as the nerve centre?

Annan's successor, Ban Ki-moon, is determined to build on the MDGs' success with a new set of precisely focused and pragmatically achievable goals. His High-Level Panel on the Post-2015 Development Agenda has submitted a set of ambitious goals, which member states must now hammer into a workable blueprint for action for the next two decades.

These are the concerns that profoundly affect billions of people's lives around the world. They would almost surely not get the kind of attention they deserve from political elites in powerful countries were it not for the United Nations. For all its weaknesses and bureaucratic sclerosis, the organisation is peerless in its political inclusivity and its ability to engage intellectual and civil society sectors around the globe in understanding problems and identifying solutions. There is no place like it on earth. ●

Opinion



Joanna Wheeler on how and why we should involve the world's poorest citizens in deciding a post-2015 development agenda

In September, the world's leaders, governments' representatives to the UN and representatives from civil society from many countries converged on New York for a Special Event on the future global framework that will replace the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in 2015. Nearby, civil society organisations talked about how to get the voices of the poorest and most marginalised through the barriers that cordon off the UN Plaza and into the post-2015 process.

The barriers are not only physical – in many ways the entire process of consultations and surveys is set up to keep those perspectives from having any real weight. There is no formal system of accountability where the people who are most affected can challenge the decisions made about global development. Yet the success and legitimacy of the post-2015 framework will rest on the extent to which it provides for their meaningful participation.

While there are success stories about how the MDGs have been achieved, these are not often the stories told by the world's poorest and most marginalised. Development interventions can often have unintended consequences: a village built to house indigenous people in Mexico sits abandoned because of the poor quality structures and the lack of viable livelihoods.

The poorest and most marginalised people have not been reached because of prevailing inequalities, including economic inequality (the lack of sufficient income), geographic inequality (many live in precarious conditions without land rights) and identity-based inequality (for example, gender-based discrimination is pervasive).

These become entrenched in the lives of people living in poverty – and they mean that simple and one-dimensional solutions are inadequate. For example, in Ghana, providing places in school is of little use if children cannot attend because they spend much of their day walking ever-greater distances to get water due to drought.

The experience of poverty is also shaped by social norms and relationships of power that limit access to rights and



A woman outlines her vision for development at the Egyptian Ground Level Panel – part of a series of events involving ordinary people across the world to mirror the UN's High-level Panel on the Post-2015 Development Agenda © Center for Development Services, Egypt

services. For example, 'city-makers' in Chennai, India live on the streets, and are often unable to access services or their rights because they cannot secure formal identification. They are further discriminated against because they come from scheduled castes—making it more difficult for them to access dignified work or stable housing.

In order to understand how people have been left behind by the MDG approach, we need to understand what prevents people from making the changes that they are calling for, and how they think that these obstacles can be overcome. Research carried out by the Participate network in 29 countries shows that future development processes need a different approach in order really to reach those who are most often excluded. This vision for global development provides an important reality-check, and is based on the following.

1. Rights and recognition for all
Rights are foundational for recognition and dignity. Being treated with respect by family members, public officials and representatives of the state, and wider society helps people see themselves as citizens. As citizens, they are able to act to

demand greater fairness and access to the resources they need.

2. Inclusion, solidarity, collective action
The most marginalised people experience discrimination within their families, in their communities and their wider society. Collective action is needed to address these problems, and that requires us to address the barriers that stop people coming together to mobilise effectively.

3. Participation, accountability, democratic institutions
Institutions that are democratic and accountable will respond to the demands of the poorest and most marginalised, and participatory approaches to decision-making can help ensure this happens.

4. Services and policies that respond to the needs of the poorest
Services and policies that effectively respond to the needs of the poorest people are holistic, long-term and have a focus on quality. Dignified livelihoods are a necessary element of their success.

It is not yet clear what the new global development framework will look like, and therefore it is even less clear how the perspectives, voices and decisions of those most affected by poverty and exclusion will be included in the process. The current paradigms of development aid are breaking down, and the emerging framework could set out new parameters that put people at its centre and give them a real say in the decisions that affect them.

Meaningful participation needs to start now while the framework is being set – and continue throughout the implementation, monitoring and evaluation stages. Without this, the post-2015 process will become just another top-down example of UN member states failing to address the most pressing problems of our time. ●

Joanna Wheeler is a Research Fellow at the Institute of Development Studies and co-Director of the Participate initiative, which aims to provide evidence on the reality of poverty at ground level

1992
UN Conference on Environment and Development, the Earth Summit, held in Rio de Janeiro

1993
The Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights established

1998
Rome Statute establishing the International Criminal Court adopted

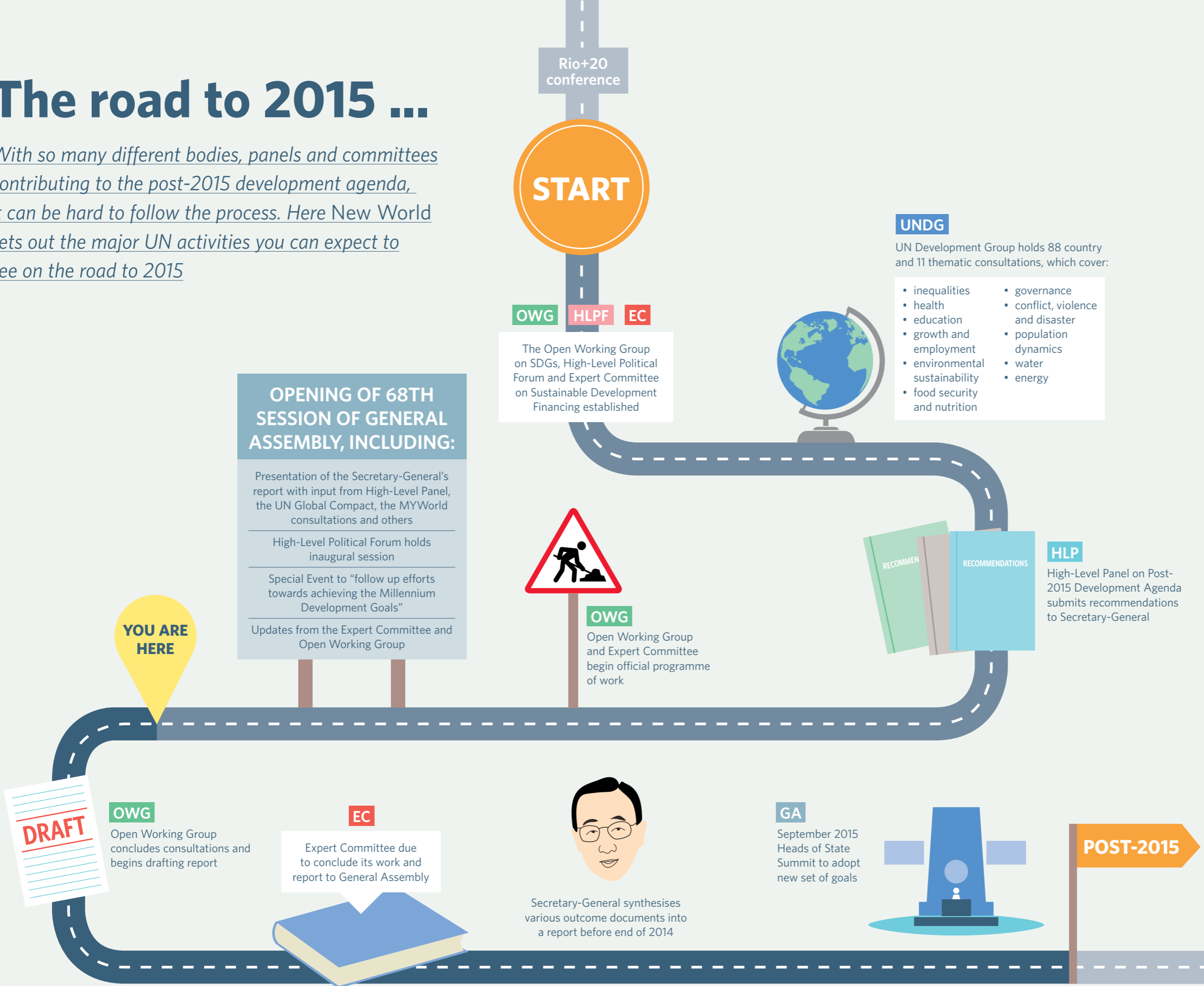
2000
UN Millennium Summit launches the Millennium Development Goals

2005
World Summit endorses the Responsibility to Protect, establishes Peacebuilding Commission and Human Rights Council

2013
General Assembly adopts the Arms Trade Treaty

The road to 2015 ...

With so many different bodies, panels and committees contributing to the post-2015 development agenda, it can be hard to follow the process. Here New World sets out the major UN activities you can expect to see on the road to 2015



OWG

Open Working Group on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

Established as part of the Rio+20 conference in June 2012, the Open Working Group is made up of 30 seats shared between 70 member states and is mandated to prepare a proposal on a set of SDGs. There is broad agreement that these goals will be integrated with a set of poverty-reduction goals.

HLPF

High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development

Also a part of the Rio+20 outcome document, the High-Level Political Forum is an intergovernmental group that will replace the Commission on Sustainable Development. The Forum will meet annually under the auspices of the UN Economic and Social Council and will review progress on sustainable development.

HLP

High-Level Panel of Eminent Persons on the Post-2015 Development Agenda

Convened by the UN Secretary-General in 2012, this 27-member panel held consultations on what should follow the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) when they expire in 2015. The Panel was co-chaired by President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono of Indonesia, President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf of Liberia and Prime Minister David Cameron of the United Kingdom.

UNDG

UN Development Group

The UN Development Group is made up of the 32 UN bodies that contribute to global development. The Group meets three times a year to discuss implementing the MDGs. The Group has been co-ordinating international, national and thematic consultations on the post-2015 agenda.

EC

Expert Committee on Sustainable Development Financing

Another outcome of the Rio+20 conference, this committee of 30 experts nominated by member states will assess financing needs, consider the efficacy of various existing frameworks and propose a strategy for financing sustainable development in the future.

I ♥ UN

This UN Day we ♥ the UN because it's the only organisation equipped to deal with the most pressing challenges facing the world today - from poverty to nuclear weapons, and climate change to terrorism

UNA-UK is the people's movement for the United Nations in the UK. By connecting people from all walks of life to the UN and influencing decision-makers to support its goals, we are helping to secure the future for our world that we all want to see.

Show your support for the UN by joining us from just £1 per month.

Only UNA-UK members can:

- Receive four copies of *New World* magazine delivered to their doorstep
- Influence our work through our policy conference
- Attend hundreds of local UNA events across the country
- Receive special publications like our recent analysis of the Arab Spring and new Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) report
- Save money with great affiliate benefits from ethical wine to magazine subscriptions

In celebration of UN Day on 24 October, anyone joining in October or November will receive both our recent 100+ page publications on the Arab Spring and MDGs.

Already a member? Help us grow the movement by buying gift membership for someone who might be interested.

Go to www.una.org.uk/join or call 020 7766 3454 to join us from just £1 per month.

Read more about why we ♥ the UN on page 22.



Towards Zero:

an update on UNA-UK's nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation activities

Towards Zero, now in its fourth year, has seen a flurry of activity in recent months. From UNA-UK's participation in the Carnegie International Nuclear Policy Conference (where 400 UNA-UK publications were snapped up within the first 12 hours), to a roadshow of nuclear disarmament lectures at universities throughout the UK, Towards Zero continues to build support for a world without nuclear weapons.

UK nuclear weapons: the UK public speaks

In July UNA-UK published a summary analysis of the results of a poll that surveyed UK public perceptions of international security. Conducted by Ipsos MORI at the end of 2012 and targeting 1,053 respondents, a substantial portion of the survey was given over to assessing attitudes towards the UK's potential use of nuclear weapons.

Key findings from the survey include:

- 68 per cent of the UK public state that no countries should be allowed to keep nuclear weapons under international law;
- 47 per cent believe that nuclear weapons should never be used by the UK;
- only 8 per cent see a nuclear attack by another country as the greatest threat to the UK's national security;
- 75 per cent of adults suggest that the UK should either disarm immediately or over a period of time (see box).

W Visit www.una.org.uk/magazine for a web exclusive on nuclear disarmament by UNA-UK Peace and Security Programmes Manager, James Kearney

Towards Zero publication series

In April and May respectively, UNA-UK published the third and fourth reports in its nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation publication series.

The third report – written by Ted Seay and entitled *Theatre Nuclear Weapons in Europe: Status & Prospects for Change* – examines the future for tactical (sub-strategic) nuclear weapons in continental Europe, assessing the politics surrounding

the weapons and the desirability of having them removed from the continent.

The fourth report – written by Dr Rebecca Johnson and entitled *Embedding the CTBT in norms, law and practice* – examines the prospects for the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT). The 1996 treaty prohibited nuclear explosions in all environments and established a global verification regime.

Dr Johnson highlights how the CTBT's international monitoring system has already proved its worth in detecting three underground nuclear tests conducted by North Korea since 2006. Although the CTBT is one of the most widely supported treaties in history, having been signed by 183 states and ratified by 159, it has still not entered into force.

UNA-UK delegation to China

One of the countries that has not yet ratified the CTBT is China. Building upon a relationship with UNA-China that was cemented at the plenary meeting of the World Federation of UNAs in 2012, UNA-UK looks forward to leading a five-person delegation to Beijing in late October. Delegates are due to take part in a high-level roundtable on a range of nuclear issues, co-organised by UNA-China and the China Arms Control and Disarmament Association.

In the media

The Comprehensive Test-Ban Treaty was also the subject of an online opinion piece, published by the *Huffington Post* and co-written by UNA-UK Chairman Sir Jeremy Greenstock, UNA-UK Peace & Security Programmes Manager James Kearney, former International Atomic Energy Agency Director General, Hans Blix and former UK Defence Secretary, Lord Browne.

The article urged the US Senate to overcome partisan divisions and ratify the CTBT, which the US was the first to sign in 1996. The authors argue that, ultimately, "ratification would bolster US national security and make its citizens safer", an argument that could be extended to nuclear weapons in general: their absence would make us all safer. ●

The UK public speaks

Q: When should the UK consider nuclear disarmament?

20%

When other countries with nuclear weapons have begun to do so

18%

Immediately, regardless of the international situation

16%

When other countries, who are not allies, disarm first

15%

Never – we should always maintain our nuclear weapons

12%

When other countries with nuclear weapons promise to disarm too

11%

Gradually, over a period of years, regardless of the international situation

9%

Don't know

Source: UNA-UK/Ipsos MORI polling, November 2012



John Everard on prospects for North Korea's relations with the West

In February 2013, North Korea shocked the world by conducting its third nuclear test, and the UN Security Council reacted by imposing the toughest sanctions yet on the country. For the next several weeks North Korea hurled blood-curdling threats at the West and it seemed that its relations with the international community, never good, were about to sink to new lows.

But since 16 April (Kim Il Sung's birthday), North Korea has toned down its rhetoric and, especially since a high-level visit to China in May (and probably under Chinese pressure), it has adopted a less aggressive approach to South Korea.

It agreed with the South both to reopen the troubled Kaesong Industrial Zone (a border complex that is the only remaining joint project between the North and South) and to allow members of some families divided by the Korean 'iron curtain' to meet for the first time since the Korean War. Does this indicate a possible opening for improved relations between North Korea and the West also? Sadly, it is difficult to be optimistic.

While the thaw in relations with South Korea is welcome, there is little sign of improvement in relations with other western democracies, and no sign of progress on the key issue of ending North Korea's nuclear programmes. For example, Pyongyang has indicated that it might return to the Six-Party Talks – the forum that aims to negotiate an end to these programmes but which has not convened since September 2007 – if it is first recognised as a nuclear power. The US has made clear that this is out of the question and, for its part, has said that it will only consider a resumption of talks if it is convinced that North Korea is serious about abandoning its nuclear programmes, which North Korea has made clear it will not do. There is therefore little room for movement.

There are other significant problems in North Korea's relations with the West. In an effort to raise foreign currency, the country has continued to trade in arms despite UN Security Council sanctions



A guard stands in front of parts for a surface-to-air missile system found aboard a seized North Korean flagged cargo ship passing through Panama Canal in August 2013 © Getty/The Asahi Shimbun

banning this. Panama's seizure of MiGs and associated equipment from a North Korean cargo ship is a case in point. There is also worrying evidence of North Korean involvement in the Syrian chemical weapons programme. The UN Panel of Experts on North Korea last year reported a major seizure by Greece of North Korean chemical warfare suits bound for Syria, and there are reports that Turkey has also recently intercepted a Damascus-bound shipment of North Korean gas masks. North Korean technicians are even believed to have worked at the main Syrian chemical weapons facility. If it is found that there was North Korean involvement in making the chemical weapons recently used by Assad's regime then the prospects for improved relations with the West will be fainter than ever.

Moreover, the improvement in relations with South Korea is fragile – already North Korea has withdrawn its agreement to the family reunions – and may stop. Sooner or later, North Korea will realise that although South Korea has agreed to reopen the Kaesong Industrial Zone (a key source of foreign currency for the North), its output will fall. The suspension scared off customers and Seoul cannot force the factories that operate there to run at former levels but the North may well suspect bad faith by Seoul.

Also, Pyongyang has asked for the Kungangsan tourist resort (another foreign currency earner for the regime,

closed after a South Korean tourist was shot dead there in 2008) to be reopened, but Seoul is reluctant. There are probably storms ahead.

There is, too, a more fundamental problem. North Korea needs much more foreign currency to keep going than its decrepit economy can generate. It tried earlier this year, by threats and bluster, to force other countries – the US and South Korea in particular – to the negotiating table (where they would have been presented with demands for financial support).

That failed, and North Korea switched to its current, more conciliatory approach, at least in regard to South Korea. But this, too, is unlikely to have the desired result. When North Korea realises this, it may well revert to violence – possibly not the mere threat of it – in an effort to extort aid from its opponents. This would chill the country's relations with the international community yet further. ●

*John Everard was British Ambassador to North Korea from 2006 to 2008. His book *Only Beautiful, Please* describes his experiences there. He also co-ordinated the United Nations Panel of Experts on sanctions on North Korea from 2011 to 2012*

The UN & the UK

This section features an update on UN-related developments in the UK and on UNA-UK's work with UK policymakers

Syrian conflict continues ...

As a permanent member of the Security Council, the UK has been actively involved in recent UN diplomacy on the conflict in Syria. In answer to the chemical weapons attack of 21 August, the UK proposed a draft resolution calling for a robust response. However, on 30 August, the House of Commons voted 285–272 against any military action against the Syrian regime in retaliation for chemical weapons use.

Ahead of the vote, Lord Hannay, Chair of the All-Party Parliamentary Group on the United Nations and former UK Ambassador to the UN, participated in a House of Lords debate on the Syrian chemical weapons question. He argued that the situation risked making a “mockery of the international norm of the responsibility to protect” and suggested issuing Syria an “ultimatum to hand over all their chemical weapons” to the UN while continuing to pursue a political solution.

UNA-UK, Oxfam and other partners began a petition in July which called on President Obama, President Putin and Joint Special Representative for Syria Lakhdar Brahimi to set a date for a Geneva conference to begin peace talks. Signed by over 100,000 people, the petition also called for the talks to include representatives of all Syrians, including marginalised and vulnerable groups. The talks have been tentatively scheduled for November.

... as the humanitarian crisis worsens

The UK has now pledged a total of £500m in aid for the humanitarian crisis in Syria, making it the second largest bilateral donor. It also represents the UK's largest-ever emergency response. Of this amount, just under half has already been allocated, divided between UN agencies providing assistance within Syria and partners supporting the two million Syrian refugees in neighbouring




A boy looks out from a tent provided by the UN Refugee Agency at a camp for Syrian refugees in southern Turkey
© UN Photo/Mark Garten

countries. 55 per cent of the UN's appeal remains unfunded.

 Visit www.una.org.uk for further information

UK engagement with R2P

In September, the UN General Assembly held an interactive dialogue on the “Responsibility to Protect (R2P): State Responsibility and Prevention”; with 68 member states in attendance to share their experiences of mass atrocity prevention. At the meeting, the UK reaffirmed its commitment to R2P and encouraged other states to create national focal points. UNA-UK wrote to the Foreign Secretary ahead of the meeting asking the Foreign and Commonwealth Office for more information on the role and activities of the UK focal point. Earlier this year, the Oxford University-based academic Jennifer Welsh was appointed Special Adviser to the UN Secretary-General for R2P.

 UNA-UK has recently published an R2P briefing paper. To obtain a copy, visit www.una.org.uk

Special Rapporteur in UK visit

UN Special Rapporteur on adequate housing Raquel Rolnik recently concluded a two-week official visit to the UK. Ms Rolnik was assessing the UK's achievements and challenges in guaranteeing the right to adequate

housing and non-discrimination in this context. She commended a number of good human rights practices, such as the Scottish Homelessness Act. However, press headlines focused on her critique of the government's “bedroom tax”. The final report will be presented to the UN Human Rights Council in Spring 2014.

Sexual violence in conflict initiative

Building on its work over recent months, the UK has continued to be highly active campaigning in the area of sexual violence in conflict. At a General Assembly side event in September, co-hosted by Foreign Secretary William Hague and UN Special Representative on Sexual Violence in Conflict Zainab Bangura, the UK announced that 113 countries had endorsed a new Declaration of Commitment to end Sexual Violence in Conflict. The Declaration sets out a number of practical and political commitments to end the use of rape and sexual violence as a weapon of war. It was also announced that the UK will host a global conference on the issue in 2014.

Ministry of Justice consultation

UNA-UK has responded to a Ministry of Justice (MoJ) consultation on the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) of the UK's human rights record. The MoJ is drafting a mid-term update on the UK's implementation of its 2012 UPR recommendations and conducted a

consultation on which human rights issues should be prioritised in the report. In this context, UNA-UK raised the following UPR recommendations:

- Ratification of the UN human rights conventions on disappearances and migrant workers
- Ratification of the International Labour Organisation's Domestic Workers Convention
- Enable UK citizens to take human rights complaints to the UN
- Consideration of risks to the independence of the Equality and Human Rights Commission
- Withdrawal of the UK's opt-out from three provisions of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

In addition, a number of other concerns and items of follow-up were raised. Members, supporters and UNA Nations also contributed responses to the consultation as part of our September action (see box below).

Countdown for the MDGs

The UK and the US held a General Assembly side event on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The event sought to showcase the valuable contribution of women and girls in achieving the MDGs. It also aimed to highlight the need to ensure gender equality is a vital component of any future development framework.

With two years to go until the MDGs expire and as the international community takes stock of progress to date, UNA-UK has published a report entitled *Global development goals: Leaving no one behind*. The publication, produced in collaboration with Witan Media, offers views on achieving the 2015 targets, and provides recommendations on the creation of the post-2015 development framework. All paid-up UNA-UK members will receive a copy.

 The publication can also be accessed online, at www.una.org.uk

Campaign success

UNA-UK is delighted to report that its campaign to retain teaching about the UN under the National Curriculum for England has been successful. References to the UN had previously been removed from earlier drafts of the Key Stage 4 citizenship curriculum, the main conduit for teaching in schools on the UK's international roles and responsibilities.

In response to two Department for Education consultations on the draft curriculum, UNA-UK called for the inclusion of explicit references to the UN, human rights and international law, and the promotion of a broad view of what it means to be an active and responsible global citizen. The Association also co-ordinated a series of letters to Education Secretary Michael Gove as part of its campaign.

UNA-UK Executive Director Natalie Samarasinghe said: “We firmly believe that this decision will enrich young people's knowledge of global affairs and enhance their ability to tackle the challenges their generation will face”.

UNA-UK teaching resources featured


UNA-UK's teaching resources were recently featured by the online Guardian Teachers Network. In an article entitled “How to teach... the UN”, the United Nations Matters Teacher's Handbook, developed in collaboration with UNESCO Associated Schools UK, was described as “an invaluable guide” for teachers wishing to introduce their students to the United Nations and international diplomacy.




 To access the handbook or request a hard copy, visit www.una.org.uk

Roundup of UNA-UK monthly actions

 **Call for Syria peace talks**
More than 100,000 people signed UNA-UK's joint petition with Oxfam and others, calling on President Obama, President Putin and Joint Special Representative for Syria Lakhdar Brahimi to set a date for Syria peace talks. This petition has now been submitted.

 **Half marathon challenge**
In August, three UNA-UK staff members set themselves the challenge of running a half marathon on 6 October. The team hopes to raise awareness about the UN while raising money for the charity. So far, over £1,000 has been raised. Any further donations will be gratefully received.

 **Ministry of Justice public consultation**
UNA-UK called on its members and supporters to take part in a Ministry of Justice consultation on the UK's human rights record. Over 100 individuals took part in the action, and reports were received from UNA Northern Ireland, UNA Scotland and the English regions acting as “UNA England”.

Correspondence

Israel and Palestine

Liz Sim's well-meaning letter about Israel and Palestine (*New World*, Summer 2013) misses the point. Since 1967, Israel has continuously whittled away land from the Palestinians. There are now around 500,000 Israeli settlers in the West Bank. Should they be removed or be under Palestinian control? Either option is seen as unacceptable to the settler population.

Surely the only "solution" (difficult though it is to achieve) is a single state with one person, one vote. A particularly interesting proposition given that the non-Jewish proportion of the population is increasing all the time.

Chris Staples
Hove

There are two illusions with regard to the Israeli/Palestinian conflict that can be found in the report on the 2013 Policy Conference and Liz Sim's letter (*New World*, Summer 2013).

First, the only conflict in the world given its own section in the Policy Conference report is Israel/Palestine. This hardly seems in accord with reality. This conflict is not even the major conflict in the Middle East as recent events make clear.

Second, Liz Sim's letter implies that Israel is demanding the whole of Mandatory Palestine. This is untrue as eastern Palestine was given to the Arabs in 1946, and is now Jordan, while the Gaza Strip was completely evacuated in 2005. The real problem is that the Palestinians, if you follow their Arabic language statements, are still calling for the destruction of Israel. UNA-UK should respond to what is really going on in the Middle East.

David M. Jacobs
Anglo-Jewish Association

Editor's note: as in previous years, the agenda for the 2013 Policy Conference was put together by the conference organising committee, which consists of UNA members, on the basis of submissions received from the membership. The subsequent report reflects the discussions held on that day.

Richard Nelmes, UNA-UK's Head of Outreach Programmes, on why we should ♥ the United Nations this UN Day

Pages 16 and 17 of this issue of *New World* make a bold and simple claim: "I ♥ the UN". Is this expression a little too simplistic? A little too bold? Perhaps. The truth is that people in the UK, even those who are already members of UNA-UK, understandably have a complex intellectual and emotional relationship with the UN. Such a relationship eludes fun one-liners and snappy headlines like this.

Sometimes though, it's necessary to take a stance, necessary to make things simple for one moment, necessary to say that, yes, we believe an organisation like the United Nations is the only way that the global challenges that affect every country can be solved.

I ♥ the UN because it's the only truly global organisation reaching beyond the short-termism of domestic politics. I ♥ the dogged tenacity with which it approaches the seemingly intractable problems which face us all. I ♥ the role it has played in all of our lives, its unsung heroes and its lofty aspirations. This is a century in which we drown in information yet thirst for leadership, a century in which we will need the UN more than ever before.

Sometimes difficult and often frustrating as it inches towards goals that humanity should have reached years ago, this is not an organisation that is always easy to ♥. In so many ways, it represents the very best and very worst of the human race, yet the human race needs the UN for its very survival.

This UN Day (24 October) we're asking people to show they ♥ the United Nations by joining UNA-UK, the people's movement for the UN. Membership is now available from just £1 per month, a tiny price for access to publications like this one and national events like our exciting 2014 UN Forum. If you're already a member, why not give gift membership for someone you know who might be interested?

In the words of UNA-UK's patron, the actor Sir Patrick Stewart: "The UN stands for a better life for people everywhere." Whether you're just curious about the United Nations or a longstanding member, make becoming a member or gifting membership your UN Day action.

Go to www.una.org.uk/join or call 020 7766 3454 to join us from just £1 per month

Population

Bruce Smith's letter (*New World*, Summer 2013) reassured us that the present rapid growth in human population is "just one issue amongst plenty of others we should be concerning ourselves with". So will this particular issue have to wait until everybody on the planet owns a private motor car?

Richard Tomalin
Suffolk

China at the Security Council

Chinese Ambassador Liu Xiaoming states that the UN Security Council needs reforming (*New World*, Spring 2013). Yet

recently China and Russia have seemed to abstain or refuse to support any Security Council agreement.

China also seems to have forgotten that it has political advisors supporting despotic regimes in such places as Zimbabwe and Syria, not to mention in North Korea. Although China is by no means the only sinner in this respect, if it wants to maintain its influence on the Security Council it must get its own house in order.

We trade with China but many of its workers are employed in conditions that are considered not only outdated but extremely dangerous. For fear of losing their jobs, workers cannot protest about these conditions. Unfortunately, the international community is closing its eyes to many of China's actions for the sake of expediency.

Fiona Johnston
Suffolk



Sponsor UNA-UK staff for their half marathon

On 6 October, UNA-UK staff members Alexandra Buskie, Ben Donaldson and Richard Nelmes ran the Royal Parks Half Marathon to raise money for the Association.

The team dedicated each training session to the acquisition of weird and wonderful facts about the UN and reported on their journey of discovery via a running blog (www.una-uk.blogspot.co.uk).

This initiative was inspired by UNA-UK's former director, Malcolm Harper, who sadly died in May of this year. He is fondly remembered for his fundraising walks, which he used as an opportunity to raise awareness of international issues and connect people in the UK to the mission of the UN. His obituary is available on UNA-UK's website.

As a charity, our work is only possible due to the generosity of others, so please do consider supporting us in our mission to create a safer, fairer and more sustainable world.



You can still sponsor the UNA-UK team by visiting
www.una.org.uk/sponsor

UNA-UK Members



The utility of force(s) – fighting for peace.
Michael Harwood considers the future evolution of UN peacekeeping



To keep the peace in a conflict situation, there are two options, the first of which is quick: surrender. The second is complex: make a stand, risk our own lives, and potentially take the lives of others. The international community – a term we sometimes mock as it suggests a level of desired co-operation that often does not exist – is almost united on one thing: the wholesale slaughter of civilians must be prevented.

In recent months, our attention has been turned towards Syria and the scourge of chemical weapons. Quite possibly, therefore, you may not have noticed a significant development for UN peacekeeping: resolution 2098 of the United Nations Security Council and its mandate for an “intervention brigade” in the Democratic Republic of Congo. Within its 9,000 words, the resolution provides the United Nations Organisation Stabilisation Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO) with the authority to “carry out targeted offensive operations” and assume “the responsibility of neutralising armed groups”.

These are testing times for UN peacekeeping. Armed groups such as the Mouvement du 23-Mars (M23) will doubtless be hoping that mere words in a resolution will mean nothing on the ground. However they will discover that “robust peacekeeping” will involve “the use of forces”, “the use of force”, and even “the use of lethal force” – each bringing different meanings and implications to MONUSCO

The Force Commander of the UN Organisation Stabilisation Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO) takes part in an observation mission with Military Observers on Munigi Hill, DR Congo © UN Photo/Sylvain Liechti

operations. With this development, traditional peacekeeping approaches are under the microscope. This is the time for the very best thinkers to get involved and for nations with experienced commanders and forces to step up to the plate. We need peacekeepers who:

- are unafraid of being in harm's way and can create stability by their very presence;
- do not exploit the Security Council's robust language nor take the softest possible interpretation;
- can intelligently utilise capabilities in all domains: maritime, land, air, cyber and information; and
- understand the necessity of military and civilian agencies working in cooperation.

There is an urgent need for states to make this intensely human investment in conflict resolution. Unfortunately, it seems that the phrase responsibility to protect has become more directed at our own deployed forces than the civilian populations we are mandated to safeguard. It is as if we dress like firefighters but do not actually attend fires for fear of getting burned. The result is that bit by bit, year by year, those who commit wanton acts of violence think they can continue to act with impunity.

In the war-weary UK, we talk of “returning to contingency” – preparing for scenarios but not actually deploying. My plea is that the UK and others should be reconsidering their approach to UN peacekeeping operations. This must take into account the views of those states that contribute to the peacekeeping budget (predominantly ‘rich’ powers) as well as those that contribute troops (mostly so-called developing and emerging nations).

Much time has passed since the UK fielded its largest military contribution of UN peacekeepers in recent years, for Bosnia-Herzegovina in the 1990s. To its credit, China now contributes more peacekeeping personnel than the rest of the permanent members of the Security Council put together. The UK, however, has fewer than 300 service personnel committed to current UN peacekeeping missions, almost all of whom are with the UN Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus. Is this not questionable given the presence of more than 90,000 uniformed peacekeepers serving in today's 15 UN peacekeeping operations?

In order to address future challenges, traditional peacekeepers should combine their expertise with that of traditional warfighters. Valuable and compelling lessons can and should be learned from both UN troop-contributing nations and those nations whose troops have recently served in Iraq, Afghanistan, Libya and Mali. The Democratic Republic of the Congo is a test; the new mandate need not be translated into a licence to kill. With the right ‘peacekeeping warriors’ involved, we can ensure an effective, legitimate and courageous stand against those who exercise power through violence. We can fight for peace. ●

Air Vice-Marshal (Retd) Michael Harwood retired in 2012 after 34 years in the RAF. His last tour of duty was based in Washington DC, as the Head of British Defence Staff, United States; this included the role of UK representative to the UN Military Staff Committee in New York

UNA-UK Youth



Ahmad Alhendawi, UN Envoy on Youth, on helping young people to achieve the future they want

With 1.8 billion young people, this generation of youth is the largest the world has ever known. This generation is not just a number, but represents unprecedented momentum for change. Youth is coming strong at all fronts, demanding opportunities for social, economic, political and human development more than ever before. With this momentum, the youth agenda has become prominent in all development discussions around the world.

This is particularly true at the United Nations where Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon has given significant priority to addressing youth development in the work of the Organisation. Today we are witnessing a momentous commitment to enhancing the lives of young people around the world, both on the part of the UN and of its various partners. This is a stepping stone for building a better future for today's youth, as well as for future generations to come.

Under the Secretary-General's leadership, and in order to accelerate the implementation of the World Programme of Action for Youth, the United

Nations system has a common work plan dedicated to youth development. Developed by the Inter-Agency Network on Youth Development, this work plan considers employment, education, human rights, citizenship, and political inclusion and entrepreneurship to be the top priority areas to guide the work of the UN family with and for young people.

As we approach a decisive time for human and sustainable development, now is the time to respond to these shared priorities by making young people full partners

The UN Volunteers Youth Strategy, which was recently launched at the United Nations Headquarters, recognises the potential and uniqueness of the youth constituency, and emphasises skills development, knowledge and personal growth. This strategy aims to increase volunteering opportunities for young

people and enhance the quality of their volunteering experience.

Less than a year ago, UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon appointed his first ever Envoy on Youth. As the holder of this position, my role is to bring the voices of youth to the United Nations system, and in parallel, to bring the work of the UN closer to young people around the world. Working with different UN agencies, governments, civil society, academia, media, and other stakeholders is central to the development of the youth agenda globally.

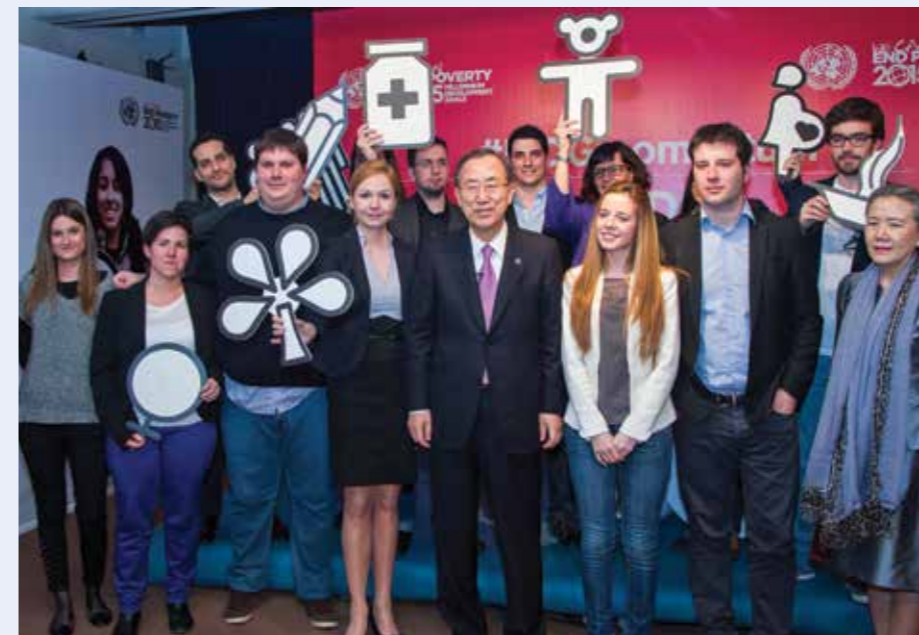
Serving as the Envoy on Youth also means acting as a global advocate for young people's rights, regardless of their socio-economic status or ethnicity, as well as paying special attention to marginalised groups, including young women and girls, young people with disabilities, young people in conflict and post-conflict zones and young people with HIV/AIDS.

In May 2013, my office presented a set of recommendations for youth inclusion to the High-Level Panel of Eminent Persons on the Post-2015 Development Agenda. This document aimed to highlight the most pressing issues that young people face, and was drawn from several outcome documents from the various consultative and inclusive processes, such as the MYWorld survey, as well as a large number of youth fora.

As we approach a decisive time for human and sustainable development, now is the time to respond to these shared priorities by making young people full partners who can truly have an impact on their own future by having their say, as well as by taking action on development, to achieve the future they want. ●

Ahmad Alhendawi of Jordan is the first ever UN Envoy on Youth. He assumed office in February 2013

UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon marks 1,000 days until the Millennium Development Goals expire with members of the Spanish National Youth Council, the European Youth Council and volunteers of the UN Millennium Campaign © UN Photo/Rick Bajornas



UNA-UK Young Professionals



Camilla Born, UNA-UK Young Professional, on working towards a more sustainable world

You're currently working as a researcher for E3G, a non-profit organisation working on sustainable development issues. Tell us about your day job.

I work to fulfil E3G's vision of a clean, fair and democratic solution for tackling climate change. As part of the climate diplomacy team, I focus on campaigning for global action. We work on a number of projects that make strategic interventions to build trust and reciprocity for multilateral action on climate change.

Unlike other global issues, climate change advocacy is constrained by impending tipping points. Given the limited timeframe, an internationally binding agreement is key to steering the world towards the internationally agreed target of limiting global warming to 2°C. We work with movements and institutions in order to amplify our collective efforts and achieve progressive action to tackle climate change.

You are also the International Team Co-Director for the UK Youth Climate Coalition (UKYCC). What does this role involve?

UKYCC is an organisation run entirely by young volunteers. Working in a horizontally structured organisation is extremely liberating. Young people are

often under-represented in the decision-making processes that affect them. UKYCC aims to challenge the assumptions about youth participation in the pursuit of transformational change.

We work on local, national and international climate issues across a range of projects - from capacity-building to policy briefings, and mentoring to political campaigning. As Co-Director I help guide the strategic direction of UKYCC's work. This ranges from discussing how we can maximise our impact to how we can make our work more empowering and fun.

Last year you were part of UKYCC's delegation to the UN's climate talks that took place in Doha, Qatar. What was this experience like?

The UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) provides space for much-needed global conversation, consensus and commitment but remains strangled by high-carbon political interests. I attended the talks as a young person committed to intergenerational justice; unfortunately the talks did not deliver. I felt betrayed and disempowered.

However, the opportunity to meet so many wonderful, committed young people from all over the world was invigorating and reignited my commitment to the global pathway toward a low-carbon world. I left knowing that in order for the UNFCCC to fulfil its mandate we needed to shift the politics.

The next round of talks are being held in Poland next month. What are you hoping to see happen there?

The talks should lay the groundwork for the 2015 UNFCCC meeting in Paris, at which countries have a mandate to deliver a new global climate agreement. Young people will be there in force, sharing our unique skills and experiences and pushing for more ambition.

While we will lobby and campaign on specific policy interventions, such as the first round of emission-reduction

pledges due in 2014, we will also bring realism to the talks. Climate change will have a profound and damaging effect on generations to come - we must make sure negotiators do not lose sight of this.

You recently joined the protests over fracking in Balcombe, Sussex. How would you describe attitudes towards climate change in the UK?

The atmosphere at Balcombe was inspiring. Awareness of climate change is strong within the UK but the appetite to take action has remained limited until relatively recently. The fracking debate has acted as a catalyst for tackling climate change. Communities are organising, defending themselves and sharing lessons learnt across the country.

Similarly, fuel poverty has formed another rallying point in the UK - one that affects people regardless of age, geography and culture. We're also seeing the acceleration and expansion of community renewable energy projects. People are fighting back.

Finally, what do you think is needed to secure a more sustainable world for the future?

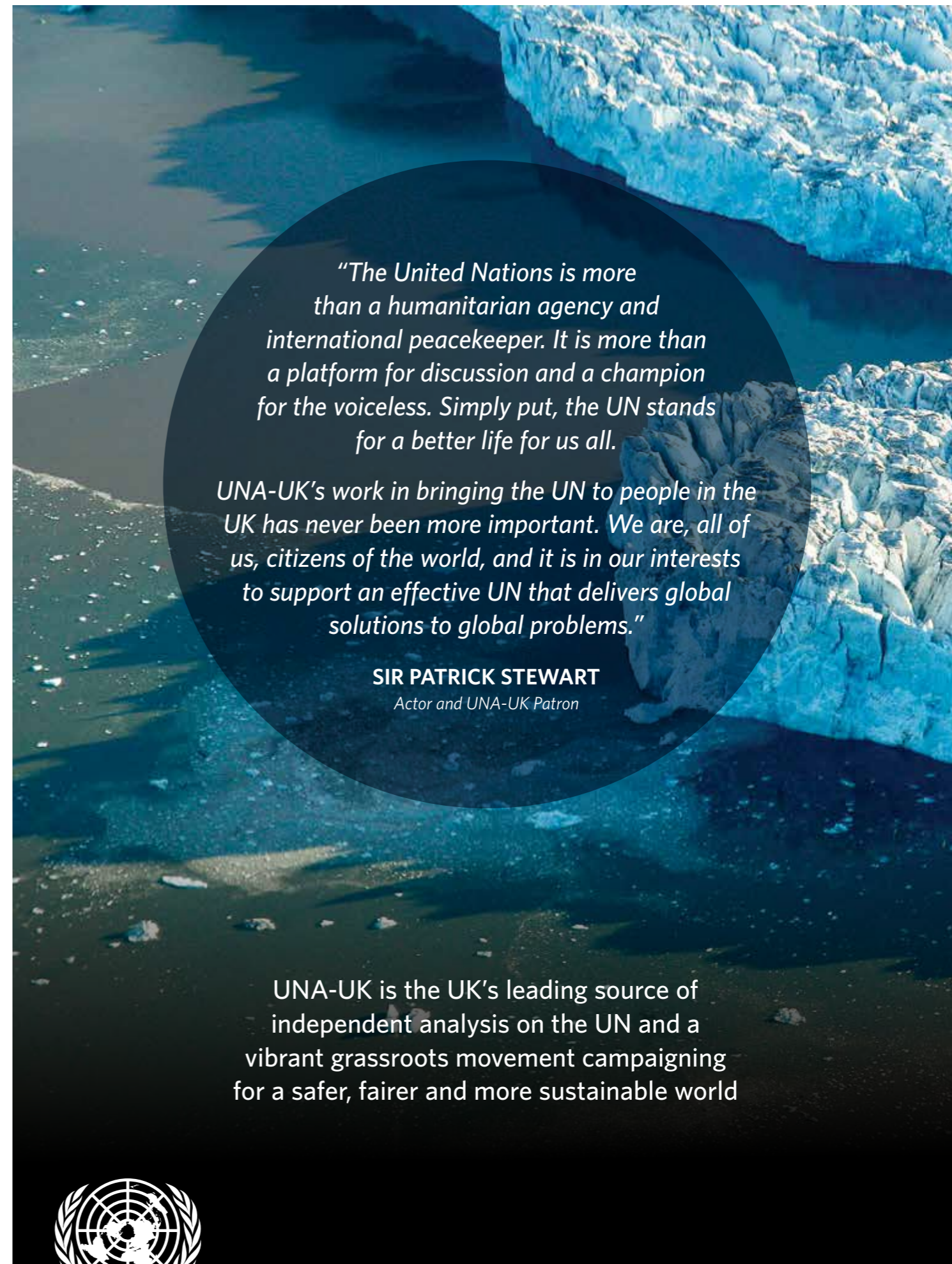
Quite simply, it's people. While the UN is a key piece of the puzzle for facilitating any global agreement, a deal between people must accompany it, if it is to be successful. We are all important actors in creating a transformational shift to a sustainable world. Transformation may seem like a scary thing but we've done it many times before, and collective community action is crucial to this.

We must liberate structures that co-ordinate at scale from elite constraints and rebuild people's trust in the democratic mandate, strengthening accountability and devolving power. We can all enact the transformative. ●

Camilla Born is an activist working towards a democratic, low carbon world. She is currently Co-Director of the UK Youth Climate Coalition and a researcher at E3G



The UK Youth Climate Coalition campaigns to include young peoples' voices in the climate change debate © UKYCC



"The United Nations is more than a humanitarian agency and international peacekeeper. It is more than a platform for discussion and a champion for the voiceless. Simply put, the UN stands for a better life for us all."

UNA-UK's work in bringing the UN to people in the UK has never been more important. We are, all of us, citizens of the world, and it is in our interests to support an effective UN that delivers global solutions to global problems."

SIR PATRICK STEWART
Actor and UNA-UK Patron

UNA-UK is the UK's leading source of independent analysis on the UN and a vibrant grassroots movement campaigning for a safer, fairer and more sustainable world



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Global development goals Leaving no one behind



In the wake of the September 2013 UN Special Event on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), the United Nations Association - UK has released a publication entitled: **Global development goals: Leaving no one behind**. At the UN meeting, states agreed to accelerate current MDG efforts and to launch international negotiations leading to the adoption of a new development framework.

This publication offers analysis and recommendations in both these areas. It considers the context in which the MDGs were developed, assesses progress to date, offers views on achieving the 2015 targets, and provides insights into the creation of the post-2015 agenda. Particular emphasis is placed on those factors that have yielded the greatest advances, and the areas most in need of urgent attention.

Contributors are drawn from the highest level participants and commentators, including:

- **Ban Ki-moon**, UN Secretary-General
- **Professor Jeffrey D. Sachs**, UN Special Advisor on the MDGs
- **Sir Richard Jolly**, Honorary Professor and Research Associate, Institute of Development Studies, University of Sussex
- **Helen Clark**, Administrator, UN Development Programme and former Prime Minister of New Zealand
- **Sir Jeremy Greenstock**, Chairman, United Nations Association - UK and former UK Ambassador to the UN



If you would like to receive a copy of the publication, please contact geraldine.brennan@witanmedia.com

