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The Dispatch

London and S.E. Region
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The Monument to Three Charters for National Reunification in Pyongyang, North Korea

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We are immensely grateful to Roger Surrage from Croydon Brach who sponsored this edition of the Dispatch

Campaigning and Educating to Turn the ideals of the United Nations into Reality

Korea and the UN: Out of sight and mind?

In October 2007, I made brief visits to North (DPRK) and South Korea (ROK), primarily to see how the Korean War (1950-53) is portrayed from both sides. The UNA London Region Trust assisted me with some of my travel costs, for which I'm very grateful.

Like most people, I suspect the ongoing unresolved tragedy of the divided Korean peninsula and the highwire political brinkmanship between both North Korea (DPRK) and South Korea (ROC) does not feature high on your political radar because it is rarely in our news media. Out of sight therefore out of mind? In fact the situation, as I understand it, is still extremely dangerous. Both sides are backed-up by two of the largest and most heavily armed forces in the world, ready to go at a moment's notice; with US military assistance to South Korea on-call as well. They do not need to move their artillery to flatten each other's capital cities – a chilling thought.

The impasse, a leftover from the Cold War, is not helped by the fact that North Korea, in my view, is an unpredictable and barbaric rogue state which we ignore at our peril, especially as it may possess nuclear weapons. It is also, forty times poorer than its 'Asian Tiger' neighbour and is unable to feed its own people without international food aid. The current Six Party Talks, encouraging North Korea to respect international denuclearisation and non-proliferation obligations, in return for political and financial benefits, hopefully will be productive, though I remain to be convinced. International pressure for North Korea to respect international human rights standards, that it has signed-up to, is also vitally important and urgent.

Since being a postgraduate student at London University and a member of UNA-UK since 1977, I have been fascinated by the United Nations and in particular - its role in 'The Forgotten' or Korean War. Twenty-one countries (including five countries which sent medical teams) took part in the USA dominated UN operation, between 1950-53, to save South Korea after it was attacked by North Korea with the practical help and connivance of the USSR and the People's Republic of China. Later China entered the war in defence of North Korea. In this very bloody war, it is estimated that 215,000 North Korean and 400,000 Chinese troops were killed and there were over two million civilian casualties on both sides. On the UN side, over 189,923 men and women were killed including 1086 British Servicemen.

I think it is important to remember that it was not only the USA that came to the defence of South Korea, even though it had considered South Korea part of its sphere of influence after the end of World War Two.

In North Korea, the tone was set when my ever present male guide and chaperone constantly talked about the US and 'its puppet South Korea' – starting the Korean War! This was followed by openly hostile remarks about the USA for its actions and alleged atrocities. He hardly made any reference to the UN and the other nations taking part in the Korean War – many of whose men are buried in the very moving UN Cemetery in Pusan, South Korea. The USA was always the guilty party and the propaganda was remorseless. Whether he believed it, is another matter. To him the United Nations equalled the USA.

During my visit, I visited a number of North Korean sites linked to the Korean War: Panmunjom in the Demilitarised Zone, (including the hut where the Armistice was agreed and a nearby hut where it was signed by North Korea and the USA (for the UN) and the actual border hut where discussions still take place), the USA/UN Wall and the Korean War Museum and statue in Pyongyang. All of these sites were fascinating but the Panmunjom negotiating hut and the USA/ UN Wall (an eight metre high concrete wall, built along the southern side of the DMZ from one side of South Korea to the other by US forces between 1976 and 1979) were especially memorable.

Across the DMZ, in an otherwise green and uneven landscape, I could see the UN and South Korean flags fluttering in the distance on a lookout fort on the 'Wall of Division', while the US Army fired blank artillery shells only a short distance away. A US helicopter clattered in the far distance and South Korean cars were visible on a road in 'free Korea' several miles away. This whole situation seemed totally unreal and frozen in time, as it has been for over fifty years. My North Korean guide – an amiable colonel in the North Korean Army – warned me about being too prominent and urged me to look at The Wall though the high powered binoculars he had provided. It was clear that the border is still very dangerous – with enormous numbers and quantities of combat ready troops and military hardware ready to move at short notice. The cost of maintaining such a status quo for both sides, and the US Government, must be considerable? Isn't there a better alternative?

The Korean War Museum in Pyongyang was predictable, with large quantities of captured US hardware on show, as well as photos of US ill deeds

and prisoners being humiliated, including the crew of the USS Pueblo. I did not see any obvious reference to the involvement of the Chinese who virtually took over the war from North Korea and its wartime leader and future president – Kim Il Sung. All very depressing and confusing, as was the Korean War statue.

There is no doubt that the casualty rate for both North and South Korean combatants and non-combatants was horrendous and tragic and that the war has cast a harsh shadow over the Korean Peninsula for over fifty years. In North Korea, however, the image of the Korean War was portrayed as if it had happened fifteen years - not more than fifty - years ago. This North Korean pre-occupation with the past – not the future – is an obvious difference between North and South Korea. It was also very upsetting to know that the UN appears to be so hated and condemned in North Korea.

In contrast, the Korean War Museum in Seoul was much more dignified – though the majority of display cabinets only emphasised the role of South Korean armed forces. There was, however, an impressive gallery on the role of their armed forces in various UN Peacekeeping and Peacemaking operations around the world. The same captured opposition hardware was on show as in Pyongyang. But there was no **obvious** finger pointing/ political propaganda in the display galleries.

I was, however, struck by the sheer horror and futility of such a cruel war that has divided the country and families for over fifty years. This feeling was emphasised by the very striking large outdoor sculpture of two brothers on opposite sides in the Korean War, meeting unexpectedly and bodily clasping each other. It is profoundly moving and encapsulates the unresolved Cold War tragedy, which has beset the Korean peninsula for far too long.

There is no easy, obvious solution to the paranoia, deep suspicion and unpredictability which still reigns supreme on both sides –

except that in South Korea most people believe, apparently, that reunification is inevitable

But “many people in South Korea have also got used to fifty plus years of the absence of war and two countries, and need real encouragement from their government to think differently”, a senior British diplomat in Seoul said to me. What people in North Korea think about the Korean War, as well as peace and reunification, is very hard to know. To quote Gandhi: “Freedom to a starving man is a loaf of bread.”

Until the current North Korean government changes its policies &/or is replaced, it is clear that the UN – in its economic and social development role, has, and should have, a vital role in providing vital emergency aid to North Korea – whose needs are overwhelming. The World Food Programme estimated recently that a quarter of North Korea’s 23 million people is suffering from a severe lack of food. It is thought that in the 1990’s over one million people died from starvation. North Korea’s poor infrastructure seriously limits the supply of aid to rural areas and this inhibits the effectiveness of the UN’s operations. There are also questions, I understand, about how much aid actually reaches those who need it most and the difficulty in accounting for where it has gone – including, allegedly, to North Korea’s armed forces. No doubt a common problem for the UN world-wide, not just in North Korea? But does humanitarian aid help an unjust government to survive? A cruel ‘Catch 22’?

It is hard to be optimistic about such a complex and intractable situation on the Korean peninsula – but I hope I will live to see a free and united democratic ‘Korea’ and an end to the overt suffering of the Korean people, which started with Japanese colonisation in 1910. What is the alternative? Another war? As it says on the Korean War Memorial in Seoul, ‘Freedom is not free’ and we must never forget the **sacrifice** of the British and other UN troops who died in the service of the United Nations in the Korean War. May they rest in peace.

Copyright: William Say

No Nonsense Guide to the UN by Maggie Black (Published by the New Internationalist, May 2008)

Sir Richard Jolly, former UN Assistant Secretary-General and Honorary Professor at IDS, Sussex University, former Chairman of UNA-UK, has written:

“This No-Nonsense Guide is brilliant. It covers so much ground and deals with a huge range of issues, yet is so well-written that the reader is swept along – I literally could not put it down until the last page. This is already extraordinary praise for a book about the UN, but even more so for one that deals with warts and all, yet reaches conclusions about the UN’s effectiveness which are both positive and believable. A triumph.”



2008 marks the 60th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights - and, alas, this is receiving very little attention either from the government or in the media.

Some people even cast doubt on its value: we often hear grumbles that "Human Rights have gone too far in this country!" and that "The Human Rights of the criminals seem to count for more in our courts than those of the victims."

Perhaps there may even be more than a grain of truth in such assertions. But there are many places in the world, - conflict ridden Balkans, war-torn Africa, and in the lands of oppressed people all over the world – where the UDHR holds out a beacon of hope against the misery that events have inflicted on them. The UDHR has also had a profound effect on human rights legislation in the years following its signing.

*The United Nations Association London and South East Region is determined to mark this important milestone, and to raise the profile of both UNA and the UDHR, through several exciting initiatives. One such event is our Summer Council meeting on 28th June, which is being held in South Africa House, Trafalgar Square, by kind permission of HE the South African High Commissioner, who will be opening proceedings. The theme of the meeting is: The Universal Declaration of Human Rights: Finishing the Job. **Please do your best to support it, both by attending, and by bringing in guests. Today's guest may be tomorrow's vibrant member!** Please note that for security reasons, attendees must register in advance (details on back page).*

A number of other events and activities are planned:

- Organising a schools essay competition which will see the two winning students funded to take part in this year's UN NGO annual conference to be held for the first time at the UNESCO Headquarters in Paris on 3rd - 5th September (not its usual venue, New York),
- Reproducing facsimiles of the original Universal Declaration of Human Rights document for Mayors and Council Leaders to sign, re-dedicating their communities to the Human Rights principles that underpin the Charter of the United Nations itself. Later in the year we are asking local branches to make contact with local mayors etc.
- To arrange suitable ceremonies, perhaps with a flag-raising event around UN Day on October 24th.
- Co-ordinating universities in the Region to each organise one event of some kind – a debate, a symposium, a lecture, or a colloquium for example - under the 60th anniversary logo. We have already had encouraging responses from half a dozen universities – and local branch members will be invited to attend.
- Support the distribution of a new Key Stage 3 book on Human Rights currently being produced, with UNA input. Again, this could give branches an opportunity to carry out a presentation ceremony, with possibly a talk to local schools about UDHR
- Set up a website www.humanrights2008.org.uk to feature all these activities and other initiatives of our branches. These initiatives include a concert at St. John's, Smith Square, London on 4th July which will include a specially commissioned 15 minute play "How the Universal Declaration was won".

To achieve our aims we need the support of as many branches as possible. If required, we can provide a speaker. So please do your best to get involved, and support as many of the events being planned as possible. To find out more about the Essay competition, and the UNESCO event in Paris, please contact David Wardrop, 61 Sedlescombe Road, London, SW6 1RE.

I look forward to seeing as many of you all as possible at these events.

Neville Grant. Chair London and SE Region

David Roosevelt (grandson of Eleanor) was Chairman of the Commission on Human Rights which drafted the Declaration – and sends a personal message to Neville...

Your Rights; a vital slogan when considering how few are aware of the birthrights accorded **all** people. The Declaration sets the standard for achievement of everyone's human rights, and yet so few have actually read this very simple document. Translated into more than 360 languages, it has provided encouragement and the moral basis for successful popular uprisings against numerous oppressive regimes.

Your work and the impressive array of activities you and your branches are planning for this celebration year are extremely important in spreading the message. I commend you for your dedication and efforts.

Please remember, human rights are everyone's business, and your commitment is essential to the futures of so many abused men, women, and children the world over! **David Roosevelt**

**We the Peoples film festival DVD.
OUT SOON!**

The compilation DVD of the recent **We the Peoples** film festival will soon be available for use by UNA branches. It contains a mix of films covering health, gender, the environment, education, peace, and campaigning. All critically acclaimed at the festival, they include *Kill or Cure, the forgotten diseases; SASA!; A Different Kind of Gun; Element 2; Running on Empty; Losing hope, women in Afghanistan; Kibera* (fresh water in Nairobi); *The Imam and the Pastor*; and *Stop the Clash*.

A Teacher's Guide will accompany the DVD which will be previewed at the Summer Council on 28 June at the South African High Commission. An application form will be mailed to all UNA branches in June.

The DVD will be available from UNA Westminster, 61 Sedlescombe Road, London SW6 1RE

We are very grateful to Juliet Colman, the Region's President for speaking to us at our Spring meeting in March.

Juliet discussed Women's Rights—60 years on from the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. There is a distinct lack of implementation on many of the policies. Continued unequal access to education and employment. Continued under representation for decision making. Lack of access to land, property and economic resources. Continued high maternal mortality. Juliet's impassioned speech left us in no doubt that the empowerment of women is a matter of **Human Rights!** In her words.. **Gender equality and empowerment of women will only be possible if women and men work together for its achievement.**



Juliet Colman

The UN Road Show

Following distribution of the publicity leaflet, Regions and Branches are making use of our Roadshow to promote both the UN and the UNA. So far this year, the Bexhill & Hastings Branch and the Chichester & District Branch are hosting the UN Roadshow on 20 September and 24 October respectively. In addition, we have two other bookings in the pipeline, and Chichester has provisionally booked the Roadshow for the Chichester Festival in 2009. If you would like more information about these events please do contact me.

Sheila Kesby
UN Roadshow Coordinator
Tel: 01227-454080 or 463968

Farewell, Bruce Robertson

Bruce retired in April, after eight years as London and SE Region's Development Officer. He joined when the HQ team was headed by Malcolm Harper and Peter Dyson and there were seven other regional officers up and down the country. "Initially, our work was aimed at starting-up new branches" explains Bruce, "but over the years the emphasis changed to helping existing branches build membership and renew branch committees."

Working on a part-time basis, Bruce spread his time between keeping in touch with branches, helping to arrange regional functions and liaising with HQ. "There was never really a dull moment" says Bruce. He particularly liked meeting members at regional events and he always thought it was a good idea to have a number of regional council meetings out-side of London each year. "I remember a meeting in Tunbridge Wells one year, where the local branch was a bit worried that no body would turn up. They did, and so many kept arriving that the meeting had to be stopped and moved to a larger meeting room!"

Not all meetings were so popular, and Bruce has many stories of meetings where only a handful of people showed up. "Once a local branch went to a lot of trouble arranging a meeting with Clare Short, not long after she had resigned from the Cabinet over the Iraq war" Bruce remembers. "Less than ten people turned up to the meeting – but like a proper trooper Clare Short gave an interesting talk and a forthright questions and answers session after".

Another area of Bruce's work involved organising the central London railway fund-raising collections each year. "One of the better collecting stations was Canary Wharf in Docklands" says Bruce. "It is a huge modern station on the Jubilee line with lots of escalators and entrances into the surrounding offices. We were busy collecting, with Elizabeth MacKeith in her 90's and in her wheel chair. All of a sudden the fire alarms went off and everything shut down – escalators, lifts, fire doors – the lot. I am pleased to say Elizabeth, along with the rest of us and our tins and buckets, were expertly guided out of the complex and safely to the designated assembly point. Never phased, Elizabeth proffered her collecting bucket to the assembled staff and security team".

A natural 'organiser', Bruce often found himself involved in 'extra curricular' tasks, such as organising Malcolm Harper's Saxon Way fundraising walk around Kent and Sussex, working behind the scenes helping to organise UNA-UK's Annual Conference – or as in last year, the national 'branch health check ' survey – taking the pulse of branch activity up and down the country.

We asked Bruce if he felt if his work in UNA had made a difference. "I think everyone in UNA makes a difference" says Bruce. "Despite its faults, UNA is a 'doing' group – not a supporters group. I can see young people coming forward, wanting to do things and make a difference – and this is a good thing".

Bruce Robertson speaks to Linda.

Pictures by Donald Coker Gibbs, at Bruce's farewell party in April 2008 at The Thai Pavilion East Restaurant in Kennington.



On behalf of us all, from Neville.,

If truth be told, I am a relative newcomer to the "higher reaches" of UNA-UK: like many UNA foot soldiers, for years I was quite happy organising events at Branch level, and occasionally receiving correspondence from UNA-UK, or the Region, and not really taking in the fact that they were separate entities, albeit under the same umbrella.

I became chair of my local branch more or less by accident, and the same applied to my involvement on the committee of the Region. In fact I cannot recall how I found myself involved: but it was only then that I realized how dependent the region - UNA-UK itself – was on volunteers, many of them either retired, or like me, still working.

And there, at Committee meetings, was Bruce, where I swiftly learnt how dependent, in turn, we were on him, our only (part-time) paid member of staff!

Always reliable, always there, always cheerful, it was Bruce who in the nicest possible way reminded us of the things we ought to do, or ought to have done – or of the things we had done we ought not to have done.

It was almost always Bruce who ensured things happened when they should: meeting rooms booked, nominations for the annual conference, mailings organised, railway collections set up, branches cheered on. Occasionally we got into diplomatic issues: ruffled feathers had to be smoothed, letters of thanks or appreciation sent, letters of invitation couched in terms that could not be refused. It was often Bruce who reminded us what needed to be done in so many different situations.

So anyone can easily see, then, how much we shall miss Bruce - not just for what he did, but for what he was – and is: a cheerful, reliable, no-fuss Kiwi who never blew his own trumpet, but just quietly got on with the job – and was usually game for a beer or two afterwards!

Thanks, Bruce, for everything!

Farewell Bruce but not goodbye!

Bruce was appointed UNA-UK's London & South-East Regional Development Officer in 1999. From day one he threw himself enthusiastically into the challenge of demonstrating how individuals from all walks of life can help further the ideals and work of the United Nations.

Over the past nine years Bruce has provided words of encouragement to ailing branches; roped in new officers and volunteers; and travelled far and wide to participate in meetings and events. He has a gift for putting people at ease. The UNA-UK Board was especially grateful for his success in conducting the comprehensive 'branch health check' in July 2007.

Bruce actively supported the Region's Committee, was an enthusiastic flag-day organiser, and an invaluable part of the Annual Conference process, scouring the country on several occasions to find suitable venues. Having worked in the past on UNDP/World Bank projects in the Dominican Republic, Egypt and Liberia, and with a wealth of voluntary experience, Bruce promoted the work of the United Nations to great effect. And whilst he was employed part-time, he put in many extra hours as a volunteer, such was his passion for the UN. I am delighted that he has expressed a willingness to continue to further the work of UNA-UK in East London, as part of what I am certain will be a highly active 'retirement'.

Bruce will be greatly missed by all of us at headquarters – his cheery demeanour, sense of humour and classic one-liners were a highlight of weekly staff meetings.

Thank you Bruce – and we look forward to seeing you at many UNA-UK events in the future!

Sam Daws, Executive Director, UNA-UK

Thank you so very, very much !

The global sanitation crisis

2008 is the International year of sanitation. Between the years 1990 and 2004, more than 1.2 billion people gained access to improved sanitation. This remarkable progress was due to the work of national governments in developing countries, whose health and sanitation workers played a crucial role; and the assistance of a number of international aid agencies, from the UN and elsewhere - including our own DFID. That's the good news. The bad news is that despite this remarkable progress, some 41% of the world's population - an estimated 2.6 billion people, including nearly a billion children - still lack access to proper sanitation facilities.

If sanitation is improved, lives are saved. But it's not just a health issue: it is a central development issue. It's a cliché now that education especially of girls has a crucial role to play in development: and if you can't be sure that your daughter has safe and clean toilet facilities, you may well not wish her to go to school. In many parts of the world, faced with the absence of toilet facilities, many parents withdraw their daughters from school when they reach adolescence.

The subject is dealt with in detail in an important new book by Maggie Black and Ben Fawcett, *The Last Taboo*, published by Earthscan in conjunction with UNICEF. In 2008, the International Year of Sanitation, the authors bring this awkward subject to the attention of a wide readership - and is highly recommended.

One World Week

UNA has always been closely involved with One World Week, and many branches celebrate it, under the auspices of their local UNA branch, in October, around UN day. In 1978, One World Week (OWW) was founded by the World Development Movement out of a desire that, for one week in every year, the churches should draw the attention of their communities to the fact that the world consists of one human race which shares one planet in which all may enjoy fullness of life.

More recently, the emphasis has shifted towards running Multi-Faith Fora, in which people of different faiths and traditions can come together for mutual understanding. Your chair took part in an Inter-Faith Forum event last October in Croydon, and urges branches to consider mounting a similar event in the branch this year. The theme of this year's events is "Growing Together" - and reflects our own concern with UDHR.

What is One World Week? We believe that when we understand each other's perspectives, our lives can be transformed and enriched.

One World Week is an annual opportunity for people from diverse backgrounds to come together to learn about global justice. To spread that learning and to use it to take action for justice locally and globally, by: working together in caring for the Earth and its resources, taking action for justice, equality, peace and fullness of life for all, building relationships of mutual respect that cross boundaries, running local events that celebrate the diversity of cultures in our communities.

OWW is open to anyone to take part. If our aims strike a chord with you, then OWW is for you, whoever you are, wherever you are, whatever your affiliations.

If you want to take part in learning together about what people can do to address global issues, then OWW is for you. If you want to celebrate the diversity of cultures in Britain today, or where ever you are, and enjoy each others company, as you discover shared values and work together on common concerns, then OWW is for you.

You or your organisation can put on a OWW event. You can plan and organise with others to share ideas and values and to spread the learning. This website has resources and links to help you. Go to www.oneworldweek.org The theme for 08, "GROWING TOGETHER " 2008 is the 60th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which aspires to: "...a world in which human beings shall enjoy freedom of speech and belief and freedom from fear and want".

Neville Grant



Terry and Rosemary Baker are the Region's 2008 Hon. Life Members, pictured here at the Spring Council, with Neville Grant and Tricia Rogers. *Read more on the back page...*

Not Rising To The Challenge

Peter Greaves reflects on a public meeting on climate change at Friends House in Euston Road in April, and asks "Are our leaders doing enough?"

Friends of the Earth (FOE) had done a commendable job in arranging the meeting in May, (about 1000 were present), with its Director (Tony Juniper), the Secretary of State for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Hilary Benn) and his Conservative (Peter Ainsworth) and Liberal Democrat (Steve Webb) shadows speaking; the chair was Anne McElvoy, executive Editor of the Evening Standard. All the speakers were trenchant, if not hard-hitting. They took pride in the forthcoming Climate Change Bill, the first of its kind in the world – yet it became apparent that on several issues the UK was not the world leader it claimed to be. I came away with an uneasy feeling that the platform had shown a tendency to self-congratulation while at the same time not really facing up to the magnitude of the challenge: a sense of urgency was muted

Hilary Benn did his best to explain why aviation and shipping emissions were not included in the present draft of the bill, but did not convince. On the appropriate target for reduction of UK CO2 emissions by 2050, currently 60%, he said that the decision had to be based on science, and that the Bill sought advice from the Committee on Climate Change by 1 December. This was greeted with some derision: why the delay? For some time scientists had been urging at least an 80% reduction. HB said that decisions on sharing the burden should be based on "global social justice." Indeed, but this was not followed up. What does the phrase mean? In this context, surely the principle of Contraction and Convergence (C&C), which the All Party parliamentary Climate Change Group (APPCCG) has called "the irreducible response to climate change"; its DVD promoting the concept ("An Incontestable Truth") contains powerful endorsements from a great many knowledgeable persons, including Sir Crispin Tickell and Dr Rowan Williams.

I completely fail to understand why there is no reference to C&C in the Bill. I asked HB about this at another meeting in March; he replied with mild

irritation that the concept was mathematically complex and all very well for the long term, but "we have to do it in bits."

There may be ingenious mathematical projections in its development, but the basic concept could not be more simple: as Milton put it, "an equal and befitting share." The Bill should – in my opinion – begin with a firm commitment in principle to the concept of C&C, so that we all (in this and other countries) know where we are heading, and then set out some of "the bits" with which we will start the process. There is not the slightest prospect that developing countries will agree to control their emissions until they see that rich countries – and we claim to be a leader - start to contract their own.

The Conservative and Lib Dem speakers claimed that their parties were responsible for some of the improvements in the Bill during its passage through the Lords, including the crucial principle that the PM had to have overarching responsibility for the execution of the Bill, because it had relevance to so many departments, some of which had much more clout than the one nominally responsible (HB's), a mere "minnow among wolves" (sharks?).

An earnest lady asked what the panel thought of the idea of carbon rationing for individuals: "intellectually elegant – a super idea – ahead of its time – public as a whole not there." In fact it is an idea that has been canvassed for some years; its implications are of course huge, but one couldn't help thinking that a government that claimed leadership in this field might have been encouraging public discussion and understanding of the issues...

Sarah Mukherjee of the BBC asked whether any party would "grasp the nettle of saying that we must use less stuff." The conservative said we must, for all resources – but he had earlier said that "we shouldn't have to give things up." Plastic bags were mentioned: "we are seeking advice...but when will we act?...other countries have done so...why not do it now? " There was a reference to NIMTO (not in my term of office). One speaker said: "This is a big issue." I doubt if Sarah was satisfied.

Peter Greaves

We the Peoples film festival. Bigger and better in 2008

The 3rd **We the Peoples** film festival, to be held in London in late November, will use as its theme the title of Kofi Annan's Report **In Larger Freedom**. This referred to **The Three Pillars of Freedom**; the freedom from want, the freedom from fear and the freedom to live in dignity. These freedoms link to the achievement of the UN Millennium Development Goals, the need for collective security and peace, and the application of justice for all as we mark the 60th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Also, it will host the world's first **Young Film-makers for Development** festival. Many film festivals feature the work of young people but none screen films relating to the issues relating to the Three Pillars of Freedom. We will show films from several countries in this exciting initiative. One session will host local schools, inviting unique peer critique opportunities. Another innovation will be the **London Schools Outreach programme** which will take films to the classroom, along with expert speakers. Also, compilation **Best of the Festival** DVD will be produced.

The Festival organisers are negotiating currently with venues and with potential partners. News of the 3rd Festival can be followed on the festival website at www.wethepeoples.org.uk



UNA Westminster Branch. Fifth Annual Peacekeeping Conference. To mark the International Day of UN Peacekeepers, this event took place at the Royal United Services Institute, Whitehall. The keynote speaker was General Patrick Cammaert, former Military Advisor to former Secretary-General Kofi Annan. At 1pm, there was a wreath-laying ceremony at the Cenotaph

Waiting to lay wreaths at the Cenotaph (shown here) was Foreign Office Minister Dr Kim Howells, Air Vice Marshall Chris Nickols, Royal Air Force and Metropolitan Police Commissioner, Sir Ian Blair. Also, Count Oscar Bernadotte (right) who laid the wreath in memory of his grandfather, Count Folke Bernadotte of Sweden, the UN's first mediator, assassinated in 1948 and Colonel Philippe Guidi, France, who laid a wreath in memory of Commandant René de Labarrière, the first UN fatality.

Photo, Benedict Parsons

Stephen Harrow, (pictured here talking to Neville) is treasurer of Croydon Branch. Recently, he made a very generous donation to the region of £7,500. This was made possible due to a bequest from Miss Pegrome several years ago to the branch. Because Croydon is relatively inactive at present, Stephen feels that this money could be best utilised in the Region – to assist with essential campaign and education work – especially bringing attention to the plight of refugees and asylum seekers, as was the intention of the initial bequest.

We are very grateful to Stephen, and of course, to Miss Pegrome. This donation will assist in many, many ways.



Summer Council Meeting
Sat. 28th June. 12.30 - 4.30
We're back - at South Africa House!

***Celebrating the 60th Anniversary of the
UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights***

UNA London & SE Region's Summer
Council Meeting
Sat. 28th June 12.30 - 4.30 pm

The Universal Declaration of
Human Rights: **Finishing the Job**
at South Africa House, Trafalgar Square
(by kind permission of HE the South
African High Commissioner)

WITH A DISTINGUISHED PANEL OF
SPEAKERS INCLUDING:

- **INTERNATIONAL LAWYER
PROF. PHILIPPE SANDS**
- **MARIE-CLAIRE FARAY-KELE OF
CONGOLESE WOMEN'S
ORGANISATIONS**
- **ALEXANDRA MCDOWELL,
LEGAL OFFICER AT UNHCR**
- **WILLIAM SAY (RECENTLY
RETURNED FROM A STUDY
TOUR OF N. KOREA)**

Please arrive at 1230. A cover charge of £10
for members (including YPN) and £5 for
UNYSA members will include a light lunch and
refreshments.

*Donations: £10.00 (UNYSA £5.00)
includes Buffet Lunch and refreshments*

For further details, and to reserve your place,
call Neville Grant on 0208 858 8489
(neville.grant@gmail.com)

Advance booking essential – no admittance on the door!

Around the Region

**Blackheath and Greenwich Branch Garden
Party on Saturday 21st June.** At 13 Glenluce
Road, Blackheath, London SE3 7SD. *It's a
FUN Fundraising Event !!!*

Donations: £4.00 (children under 16 free)

- Raffle
- Tea and cake
- Bring-and-buy stall
- Woodland garden

Please bring small items for our Bring-and-
Buy stall (eg. plants, unwanted gifts such as
that vase from Auntie Mabel etc.) RSVP
Neville and Jane Grant 0208 858 8489

Station Collections will take place on

26th June at Euston Mainline Station
29th July at Westminster Underground
25th September at Victoria Mainline Station
October at St. James Park to be confirmed

*We are very grateful to anyone who can help out
at any of these collections. Please ring Neville on
0208 858 8489 if you are able to help.*

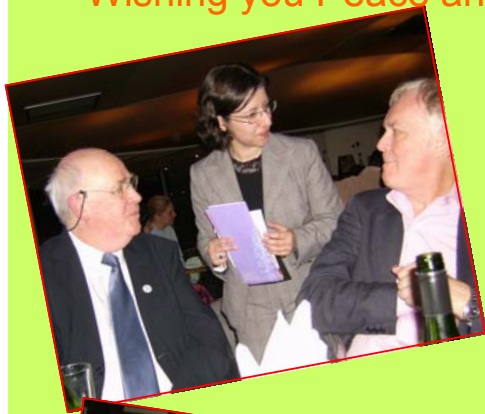
**Tuesday 10th June. Tuesday 17th June.
Tuesday 24th June. UNA Merton Branch.**
Alison Williams will be conducting a series of
workshops about the UN Global Compact, a
voluntary corporate citizenship initiative. **The
workshops will run twice a day on the
above dates,** For further information, please
contact Alison Williams on 020 8944 0574 or
alisonwilliams36@tiscali.co.uk

**Friday 4th July. UNA Westminster. A
Concert at St. John's, Smith Square, London.**

The concert will be held to mark the 60th
Anniversary of the adoption of the Declaration
of Human Rights. Booking details will be
announced on www.unawestminster.org.uk

This edition of the Dispatch was edited by Linda McCulloch

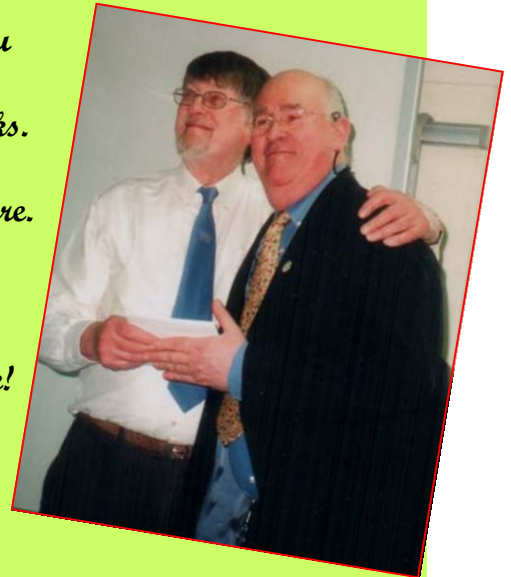
Bruce,
Wishing you Peace and Happiness in the future,



To Bruce": a Haiku
Smoothly our Ship docks.
On Time. Safe. All Here.

How Come?

We run on Bruce Time!
David Wardrop



With love and best wishes from all in the Region

With Grateful thanks to Terry and Rosemary, for their loyal and dedicated service to UNA, the Region's Hon. Life Members of 2008

Terry and Rosemary Baker have been the mainsprings of Wealden Branch for many years. In addition to running the affairs of the branch, they have specialised in running Mungas. In 2008, the Branch held its 23rd Munga; over the years it has influenced some 2500 young people. At these Mungas they have maintained a very high standard both of organization, and of support material, including large flags and flag-stands, which they are willing to lend to other branches.

During that time they composed briefings and draft resolutions on some 28 different World issues including Slavery, Women's rights, Child soldiers, Crime and punishment, the Arms Trade and the inevitable - Climate Change. In one year alone, they ran five Mungas. They have worked closely with Nick Levine, but as they have not been getting any younger, they have been looking round for others to take on the baton. It was only when they announced that they were to give up the work in September 2007 that some super people emerged as if by magic to take over the work. Since then 3 further Mungas have been successfully run with a little help from them, two in Lewes and one in Ghana! For as you see, Terry and Rosemary find it hard to say no! Three more are planned in the year ahead, two in Uckfield - and one in Brighton.

Asked about their activities, Terry said: "We strongly recommend running Mungas to other branches if they do not already run similar events. What an opportunity - to influence the thinking of 17 year olds who are likely to be influential members of society in the years ahead when they are at their most receptive and likely to be making Career choices just before University! It is a chance not to be missed. Running these Mungas has been a very enjoyable experience and very rewarding. Feedback from Students, Teaching staff and Observers has been very complimentary." *Neville Grant*