



WORLD FEDERATION OF UNITED NATIONS ASSOCIATIONS
FEDERATION MONDIALE DES ASSOCIATIONS POUR LES NATIONS UNIES

A peoples' movement for the United Nations

REPORT

Symposium of European United Nations Associations

17th – 18th March 2006
At the Palais Wilson, Geneva, Switzerland

Sponsored by UNA Switzerland

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

From 17th to 18th March 2006, The World Federation of United Nations Associations (WFUNA), in collaboration with the United Nations Association (UNA) of Switzerland organised a Symposium of European UNAs. Representatives from twenty-five European UNAs attended it. The primary purpose of the Symposium was to bring together UNAs from all over Europe to share experiences, projects and networking opportunities, with the eventual aim of re-establishing a precedent for an annual regional meeting to take place in Geneva.

This report provides a summary of the presentations given by each participant to the Symposium, as well as a record of the discussions that took place, and the documentation given out at the start of the meeting. The report also includes three recommendations which evolved as the result of the Symposium. These were presented the following weekend to the WFUNA Executive Committee, and were approved for further action by the WFUNA Secretariat in Geneva.

Before the Symposium, a questionnaire was sent out to all participants (Annexe II). The questionnaire requested a summary of any projects that the UNA wanted to share with the Symposium, asked UNAs to specify if there were particular UN agencies from which they would like a briefing, and explained that the session would include a presentation by the WFUNA Secretariat about their services to UNAs, where UNAs would be afforded the opportunity to raise concerns.

Drawn from the results of the questionnaire, the agenda for the first day of the Symposium was divided into project based themes: Civil Society, UN Awareness Raising/Advocacy, Model United Nations, Education, UNAs in Transitional Countries, Millennium Development Goals and Inter-UNA Cooperation. UNAs presented one project, which they felt would be of interest to the group. The broad variety of projects described, reflected the diversity of UNAs present, both in their content and reach. From newly established UNAs working on their first Model United Nations, to academic projects, to a cartoon character designed to promote the UN to families with young children. The wide range of projects was an illustration of the varied work of UNAs across Europe. The final part of the first day was devoted to presentations by UN Agencies and other International Organisations, based in Geneva. Each speaker directed their statement to how European UNAs could work with their agency or organisation on specific projects currently in motion.

M. Paroz, Chief of UN Coordination at the Swiss Foreign Ministry, opened the second day of the meeting. He emphasised the support of the Swiss Government for the work of Civil Society and especially for WFUNA and UNAs. Bruna Faidutti, Director of the WFUNA Office in Geneva and Deputy Secretary-General of WFUNA followed his statement with a presentation titled "How can UNAs make their best use of the WFUNA Office in Geneva?" This stimulated an exciting discussion, resulting in the creation of three recommendations from the Symposium (see page 27). An additional proposal for collaboration was tendered by UNA Italy for consideration by European UNAs after the

meeting had concluded. This proposal has also been included in the report (See Annexe VII).

As you will read, the Symposium was a real opportunity for UNAs to exchange ideas, discuss projects and analyse common problems. WFUNA would like to thank UNA Switzerland for encouraging and financing this fruitful networking experience. We hope that this meeting set in motion the process of enhancing co-operation between European UNAs, which will be continued through the Secretariat's work on the recommendations produced by the Symposium, and further regional meetings of this nature in the near future.

Bruna Faidutti
Deputy Secretary-General

The Symposium of European UNAs

WELCOME STATEMENTS

Welcome statement by Bruna Faidutti, WFUNA Deputy Secretary-General, Geneva

Dear Friends and Colleagues,

In the name of WFUNA, I would like to extend to you a warm welcome to this meeting in Geneva. I am extremely happy to see you in the Palais Wilson, home of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and the former site for the League of Nations.

I would like to thank the United Nations Association of Switzerland, because of whom we are all here today. As the UNA from our host country, they have been extremely supportive of the Federation. We have worked with them on several projects and they have also sponsored this event.

Let me remind you that in 1946 UNA Switzerland was among the founding members of WFUNA. The Association has therefore had a long history of lobbying their Government, the Parliament, as well as networking within Civil Society. One of their aims was achieved when Switzerland joined the UN in September 2002.

Equally, I should mention our gratitude to the Swiss foreign Ministry who have also provided us with their support since 2003.

It should be recorded that in 1967, WFUNA's first and so far last Secretary-General from the « Third World », Horace Perera, organised the First regional Conference of European UNAs. The theme was "European Security and Co-operation". It was the first NGO Conference on this theme. This was followed by WFUNA biannually in different capitals. The theme was taken up by other NGOs and public opinion was mobilised ending with the "Final Act" signed by 35 European countries in 1975 in Helsinki setting up the "Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe" (CSCE). The last Conference of European UNAs took place in 1996.

We would like to see this Symposium as a step towards the revival of such important events. At a time when Europe, after being reunited, is working on its consolidation, we believe UNAs should be a strong voice in European civil society in favour of multilateralism, peace and the promotion of human rights. Exchanges of best practises and fruitful cooperation among European UNAs should be enhanced and we hope that over these two days we will be planting the seeds of common regional projects.

Before giving the floor to Mr. Häberli, Executive Vice-President of UNA-Switzerland, and to you so that you can introduce yourselves, I would like to go over the agenda of our two-day meeting.

Considering the importance of time at this Symposium and to facilitate the discussion of all the subjects proposed by UNAs, the following subjects have been grouped together:

- Civil Society
- MDGs
- MUN
- Education
- UN awareness/information
- UNAs in transition

Due to time constraints, each UNA's presentation will be limited to 10 minutes, followed by statements from the ILO, WHO, UNICEF, representatives of the Office of the High Commissioner and NGOs actively involved with the UN Office in Geneva.

On Saturday, Mr Jean-François Paroz, Head of UN Coordination of the Swiss foreign Ministry, who will focus his speech on the importance of Civil Society, will open the session.

This will be followed by a statement given by myself as the Deputy Secretary-General of the WFUNA Office in Geneva, where the activities developed and carried out by the Geneva Office during 2005-2006 will be presented.

The last part of the session will be devoted to an open discussion about how European UNAs can make the best use of the WFUNA Office in Geneva in pursuit of their objectives and make the Federation a genuine movement in support of the United Nations.

Welcome statement by Christian Häberli – UNA Switzerland Executive Vice President

As the representative of the hosting UNA, Mr. Häberli welcomed the participants and expressed his satisfaction at being able to assist in the preparation and the organization of the meeting.

He stated that the situation of the Swiss UNA is paradoxal because Switzerland is one of the richest countries in the world but the Association is one of the poorest UNAs. Nevertheless, a new impetus is being given to WFUNA for it to assist the Association in the formulation and implementation of national programmes.

Mr Häberli also acknowledged that as European countries share common values, European UNAs are able to profit from an exchanging experiences with other UNAs addressing similar problems. Therefore, he requested that the Symposium be considered a platform for sharing best practices in order to enhance multilateralism, peace and human rights.

GENERAL INTRODUCTION TO THE UN ASSOCIATIONS

UNA-Austria is an active member of WFUNA. It organised a regional conference of the World Federation in Vienna in October 1998. Furthermore, on many occasions, UNA-Austria has cooperated effectively with the Austrian Association for Foreign Policy and International Relations and with the Diplomatic Academy in Vienna. Its youth branch is very active through the UN Youth and Student Association of Austria-Academic Forum for Foreign Affairs (AFA). The Association organises various activities, ranging from panel discussions to simulations of UN conferences, excursions and regular publications. It highlighted the importance of increasing participation of civil society, because the activities of the UNAs should not only be limited to the academic world.

UNA-Belgium explained that they operate with close and regular links to the government. The UNA's activities include the organization of meetings, conferences and symposia. They also edit publications. Although the academic community welcomes these activities, a concern remains about how to approach the general public, young people and the media.

UNA-Czech Republic stated that her country was a founding member of WFUNA. The main programmes of UNA-Czech Republic are educational projects and MUN. Highlighted among these activities were Seminars with diplomatic attendance and an international conference for young researchers.

UNA-Estonia described their Association as led by a group of active students. The Association is a project-based organization, which operates without an office.

UNA-Albania described themselves as a very young Association. They joined WFUNA in 2004. A MUN was organised by the students, founders of the Association.

UNA-Gibraltar has been active for 7 years. It expressed the need to learn about experiences of other associations as well as to exchange information.

UNA-Hungary was established in 1947. There are 1200 members and a very active youth branch. The representative congratulated the initiative of the WFUNA Office in Geneva for organizing the meeting. He recalled that a session similar to the Symposium was held 10 years ago. He considered the conference to be a good opportunity to share fruitful experiences.

UNA-Ireland with a 50-year-old membership to WFUNA, has 600 active members. This Association also confronted the issue of the recurrent lack of funds within UNAs.

UNA-Italy was a founding member of WFUNA. It operates under the supervision of the Italian Ministry for Foreign Affairs. As in all major foreign affairs institutions there are three main interrelated fields of activity: international training, documentation and information, research. (See Annexe VI, which is UNA-Italy's Project proposal)

UNA-Latvia has been a member of WFUNA since 1993. It has been working hard to promote economic, social and educational projects for civil society such as the millennium declaration and the minority rights, which are a real issue in Latvia. Concern was expressed about financial support.

UNA-Luxembourg has 150 members. The representative made reference to the celebration of the 60th anniversary of WFUNA and proposed to organise an event for the occasion.

UNA-Macedonia was also established in 2000, it became affiliated to the Federation in 2004. The Association receives mainly foreign support from organizations such as the EU.

UNA-Norway announced by contrast that the Association receives 3.4 million Euros per year through the Norwegian Department of Foreign Affairs. It has 34 staff in 6 different offices around the country and has 70 member organizations. It is a very active Association.

UNA-Poland was a founding member of WFUNA. After a non-active period, the Association has just been re-established. No support is received from their government.

UNA-Russia was established in 1956. The Association works on a wide range of UN issues: sustainable development, international law, human rights and in particular youth programmes such as MUN.

UNA-Serbia was founded in 1952 under Yugoslavia. It is interested in reviving inter-UNA cooperation.

UNA-Slovenia was established in early 1950s. It would like to get more involved with the WFUNA network. It also suffers from financial problems.

UNA-Spain considered this meeting a very important platform from which UNAs could have a better understanding of WFUNA and what it can do for European UNAs. UNA Spain was established in 1962. They mainly work on human rights issues.

UNA-UK was established in 1944 before the creation of the UN. UNA-UK noted that, despite the diversity of countries represented, the UNAs present all faced common problems (funding, state support, renewal of membership, etc), not least trying to cover the work of an organization with such an expansive mandate with so few resources. The representative of UNA-UK therefore looked very much forward to hearing how the other UNAs present had been tackling these obstacles and relaying these lessons learned to colleagues in the UK.

The following UNAs arrived after the roundtable presentation: UNA-Bulgaria UNA-France, UNA-Germany, UNA-Lithuania and UNA-Romania.

UNA ACTIVITIES AND BEST PRACTICES

Civil Society

UNA-Switzerland

The Swiss UNA experience is as one of the world's oldest; even older than the UN. UNA Switzerland lobbied in favour of the UN for many years without success. In 2002 Switzerland joined the UN through a people's independent vote (54%). Since Switzerland's accession, UN-sceptics have remained numerous and they have had good reason; the real UN can be very different from the ideal UN. However it is important to stress that there is only one UN.

The Swiss government provides critical support to the UN by making statements without turning a blind eye. UNA Switzerland works in close cooperation with the Swiss government but they retain independent roles.

UNA Switzerland annually organises a Conference, held in June, where NGOs, the media and the private sector are invited. The aim of this Conference is to prepare for Swiss participation in the United Nations General Assembly later in the year. The Conference follows the publication of the Swiss government's report of its activities within the UN. The Conference is a platform where all major Swiss NGOs may voice their concerns on UN related topics and the General Assembly's agenda items; public discussion then takes place; a report of the outcome of the Conference is handed over to the government and reported back to Civil Society at large.

UNA-Switzerland's idea has been to try to make UN decisions more local by breaking down GA topics into local subjects. The Association regularly asks Swiss UN employees to testify about their experiences at the UN, thus helping to inform and educate fellow citizens about the UN and its activities.

UN Advocacy and Awareness Raising / Information

UNA-Belgium

The Symposium was informed that an important international conference on "The United Nations and Africa" is scheduled to take place this year on the 24th of October. It was also mentioned that a comprehensive and critical monograph was published on the occasion of the celebration of the 60th Anniversary of the UN (in Dutch).

The cooperation with UNRIC in Brussels may be a good way of reaching out to the general public.

UNA-United Kingdom

The presentation made by the representative of UNA-UK focused on ‘how to do more with less’. The representative recounted that UNA-UK had spent 18 months recovering from an acute financial crisis, which had forced the staff of the organization to shrink from 20 to seven. Despite these constraints, the organization had, under the new Executive Director, taken a number of important steps forward, including expanding its outreach to young people and professionalizing its website and publications. UNA-UK had also made progress towards fulfilling its two fundamental aims of 1) becoming the UK’s leading independent policy authority on the United Nations and 2) maintaining and building upon its strength as a vibrant UK-wide grassroots organization.

Key strategies for UNA-UK during this period of financial difficulty have been: first, to ensure that the work of UNA-UK adds value and that work done to a high standard by other organizations is not duplicated; second, to ensure that our outputs (i.e. briefing papers, reports and other publications) can be easily tailored to target different constituencies (i.e. academics, local activists, young professionals etc); and, third, to ensure that the internet and electronic communication are used wherever possible (for example, the representative reported how UNA-UK was in the process of setting up a ‘virtual’ panel of experts to provide advice on how to implement its policy, rather than expend scarce resources on servicing a standing committee for the same purpose).

To illustrate how these strategies had been utilised, the UNA-UK representative told the delegates about its flagship project over the last 18 months: a public consultation, in collaboration with the UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office, on the proposals for UN reform put forward by the UN Secretary-General in *In Larger Freedom*. A key objective of this process had been to feed the views of the public to the UK government as it formulated its position before the September 2005 UN World Summit. This process had culminated in a final report, *In Larger Freedom in the UK*, which was made available to the UNA delegates at the meeting, and a major policy speech to UNA-UK by the Secretary-General himself in London in January 2006 (copies of his speech were also distributed).

The effects of the In Larger Freedom public consultation had been very positive. It had served to raise the profile of UNA-UK nationally and internationally; it had helped UNA-UK articulate an agenda for implementation following the agreements at the World Summit; and it had allowed UNA-UK to reach out to new constituencies and thus augment its membership and wider networks.

Model United Nations

UNA-Serbia

The UNA-Serbia was founded in Belgrade in 1952. Yugoslavia was one of the founding member States of WFUNA. The UNA-Serbia maintains itself as an independent organization despite the difficulties its country is experiencing.

UNA-Serbia's work is focused on providing information and teaching knowledge about the UN through "global thinking" projects organised in schools and through UN day activities. They encourage research about the UN through expert meetings and roundtables. A MUN has been run for the last 3 years focusing on actual global challenges and has been a growing success.

Unfortunately there is not a good network for fundraising in Serbia.

Education

UNA-Slovenia

UNA-Slovenia organises an annual competition for students whose BA or MA thesis concentrates on a subject related to the work of the UN. A prize is distributed on Human Rights Day and important speakers are invited to attract the media and create a good image of the UNA.

Although this activity is very positive for the UNA's public profile, it has not solved the funding problem from which UNA-Slovenia is suffering.

UNA-Lithuania

The UNA of Lithuania was established in 1993 with a view to promote democracy, human rights, especially the basic rights of freedom of expression and self-determination, as well as multicultural respect and understanding, and international cooperation. From the very start, the Association has closely collaborated with Baltic and Scandinavian UNAs.

Last November a Youth Chapter was set up comprised of a group of well-motivated students of political science and international relations at Vilnius University. Acting together with the Lithuanian Department of "Transparency International" and "Institute of Civil Society", they organize public debates, seminars and conferences on such issues as "Actual Problems of Global Migration", "Tolerance and Dialogue of Cultures", "How Far Can Freedom of Expression Extend" and "Students' Rights and Responsibilities". In order to organize a MUN in partnership with their Swedish colleagues, the young members of UNA-Lithuania will organize a seminar in Vilnius this April. In May, they will launch an Internet website.

The UNA also faces fundraising problems.

UNA-Ireland

UNA-Ireland celebrates UN calendar Days in order to increase their public profile. On these occasions, the UNA tries to organise a variety of events through the website and the media, and by inviting special guests and UN officials for example Mrs Mary Robinson to speak.

The Association has always had a very strong programme for Human Rights Day. In 2005, the international year of physical activities, the theme of sport was used as an example of a unifying concept to face national border conflicts.

UNA Ireland provides specific UN related materials to schools. It organises a MUN at college level. It also organises research and development projects to help universities and libraries such as the Dag Hammarskjöld library to focus on UN topics.

Special fundraising projects are carried out with WFP, UNICEF, and a HIV programme is also underway.

UNAs in Transitional Countries

UNA-Poland

After the fall of the iron curtain, Members of UNA-Poland were among those chosen to work in the new government, as they were skilled and well prepared. The Association is just now re-establishing itself after a period where it was dormant.

UNA-Poland expressed the need to organise similar symposium and bilateral visits for young people, this they regard as an important task for the future.

UNA-Poland is carrying out a project on environmental protection, as it is considers this one of the main problems of the 21st century.

Discussion

UNA-Hungary has various special programmes and regularly holds meetings with officials of the Hungarian Foreign Ministry. It organises a UN Academy every 4-5 years. The last one was held in 2005, with approximately 300 participants and 10 lectures. A certificate was delivered to each participant at the end of the meeting.

Most participants were university students, while others were representatives of NGOs or the government. The last UN Academy was a real success. This is a good way to enlarge UNA membership and to increase the influence of UNA activities.

In Hungary, many students are interested in writing on international relations topics and regard UNA Hungary as a good source of information.

UNA-Hungary has created a Committee gathering retired civil servants, experts of UN and peacekeepers who are often very actively involved in the activities of the Association.

UNA-Spain recognises the activities of the Federation as an official channel between the UNAs and civil society.

It considers that through the Memorandum of Understanding set up between the UNRIC and the WFUNA, the activities and the links existing between the UN and Civil Society are recognised.

To reach out Civil Society, it is important to set up a calendar that provides accessibility to relevant conferences (held outside working hours) for the general public.

UNA-Spain considered it important that UN Associations should not have to pay for receiving UN officials, especially when they are in the region for their own purposes.

The first MUN in Catalonia (C'MUN) will be organised in May. UNA-Spain really hopes that other UNAs will be able to send students to join it.

Concern was expressed about the difficulties faced when approaching the media on a regular basis.

UNA-Macedonia has created a network of associations working on educational projects in the area of human rights. UNA-Macedonia set up a programme in partnership with the European Union to reach out Civil Society.

Similar problems as those experienced by UNA Spain were expressed with the media: either they do not show up to cover events that the UNA has organised or the Association is forced to pay for important officials to make the event attractive and ensure the media is present.

UNA-France supports a project developed by the Institute of Political Science in Paris. This programme aims to help students from marginalized sectors of society who have difficulty participating in regular studies and who have problems accessing high level academic institutions. This project is derived from the Millennium Development Goal on Education through its focus on the importance of education for the future of young people.

UNA France recommended to other UNAs that dealing with social problems is a good way to get Civil Society and the media involved.

UNA-Austria UNA-Austria stated agreement with previous speakers, that civil servants should not receive financial retribution for their participation in UNA meetings. It was proposed that the funds saved by closing certain information centres should be used to finance the travel and accommodation fares of UN Officials.

WFUNA The Memorandum of Understanding between the Department of Public Information and WFUNA could be a way to cooperate further with the UN and request some assistance for UNAs to promote the UN.

UNA-UK stated that it has never had to pay for anyone to come and speak from UNDPI. They write to the official offering them a platform and this is usually accepted.

UNA-Ireland stated that it doesn't have to pay for permanent UN officials to speak because they try to keep an eye on the schedules of those officials who they would like to speak, and invite the speakers when they plan to stop over in Ireland.

However, disappointment was expressed that UNA Ireland has had to pay for UNRIC staff (the person who covers UN info in Brussels) to come to Ireland.

WFUNA stated that a letter should be written and sent to the Department of Public Information indicating the surprise of the WFUNA secretariat regarding the matters raised. The letter should also propose a revision of the Memorandum of Understanding.

UNA-Czech Republic believes that there are various ways to reach out to the public. They chose the education of children as an objective and for that reason decided to train high school teachers. A project is being developed to make undergraduate students more aware of current global challenges. An international conference will take place in Prague in May for postgraduates. (The application deadline is at the end of March.) The idea is that postgraduate students and young researchers can share their experiences with undergraduate students. Another conference will take place in September 2007, this will focus on central UN topics (Global Security, UN Reform, peace building). Top researchers are needed to act as the chairs of the panels.

Millennium Development Goals

UNA-Russia

UNA-Russia considers that the debts of the poorest countries should be cancelled in order to implement the MDGs. They focus on bi- and multilateral aid for African countries. The Association holds regularly seminars with the national as well as the regional Parliament. UNA-Russia has developed many links and worked with Universities and the private sector. This approach also helps reduce expenses in the organization of events.

UNA-Albania

UNA-Albania has set up a programme entitled Youth MDGs National Forum in partnership with UNICEF, UNDP Albania, UNFPA, and UNRC. The Ministries of Tourism, Culture, Youth and Sports support this project.

Their three main objectives are:

- To promote international political, cultural, economic and social leadership awareness and approaches among young people, through democratic structures and decision-making processes based on the development of the Millennium Project Strategy
- To get the young people involved in the MDGs
- To promote the implementation (action plan) and the monitoring of the Millennium Project Strategy and other policies and programmes related to youth. This objective has been facilitated by key experts in specific areas, and been taken into account in the CCA, NSSD, EU Sap. and specifically the Albanian National Youth Strategy.

UNA-Norway

UNA-Norway was founded in 1946. The Association carried out a lot of activities connected to the 60th UN anniversary. Their target groups are schools, the general public and especially families. Their website has high visibility within Norway as there are approximately 90,000 visitors every month. UNA-Norway invited 9 young people to set

up their blogs on their website as “Ambassadors of UNA of Norway”. This initiative has established a good communication channel with Civil Society as well as a cooperative relationship with the media

UNA Norway is one of the 4 partners for the campaign of the implementation of MDGs in Norway.

In order to focus their advocacy strategy on “the family” UNA Norway have just re-launched a fantasy figure created many years ago called FN Filuren. This fantasy figure will spread the message of the campaign for this year, which is “A promise is a promise”. An actor is playing the figure and will travel around Norway to meet children and their families at events aimed at the family. A website has also been launched dedicated to children and the MDGs. The character is expected to emphasise the worlds’ most important promise: the 8 MDGs, and the role of politicians in keeping their promises to meet these goals.

UNA-Romania

Affiliated to the WFUNA, ANU-Romania continues the series of events devoted to international days and decades proclaimed by the UN General Assembly, the United Nations conferences and anniversaries, it also carries out intensive action in the fields of research, education, and observance of human rights, at both national and international levels.

The multitude of human rights issues in which the Romanian UNA has been interested since its foundation is illustrated by the great variety of topics dealt with in the large number of publications issued under the auspices of the Association. Thus, the works published by ANU-Romania include, on the one hand, some more general topics, e.g. "International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights", "International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights" and "Human Rights in the UN System".

On the other hand, many of ANU-Romania's publications deal with more specialized topics. One very important topic is racism: "Fighting racial discrimination. Aspects", "UN Mechanisms for the Implementation of Human Rights". ANU-Romania has also paid attention to so-called 3rd generation rights, the translation of Boutros Boutros Ghali's "Agenda for Development" is a good example in this respect. Another important translation sponsored by ANUROM is Boutros Boutros Ghali's "Agenda for Peace". Last but not least, gender related issues have also attracted the Associations attention, this was illustrated by the publication of the work "Equal Opportunities, Equal Treatment".

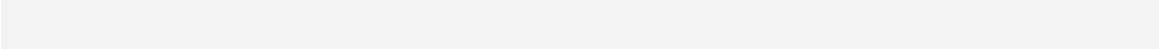
Inter-UNA cooperation- Discussion

UNA-Spain presented material on the MDGs published by UNA-Spain free of charge for schools and community centres. They made a book of Mandalas, leaflets and bookmarks.

UNA-UK stated that although working with youth is important, it is easy. After graduation is where UNA UK has noticed that they really lose touch with young professionals. The Association has therefore launched a young professionals network that is hoped will allow the UNA to keep in touch with students after graduation, and at the

same time will create links with the private and public sectors. This programme was established in cooperation with UNA-USA and UNA-Canada.

UNA-Gibraltar considers it important for European UNAs to work together. The representative expressed his desire to find better ways for working together and for supporting each other, where UNAs are experiencing similar problems.



PRESENTATION OF THE ACTIVITIES OF UN AGENCIES AND OTHER INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS IN GENEVA

Human Rights Education (OHCHR)

Elena Ippoliti

Highlighted five ways in which UNAs can cooperate with her Office:

- World programme of Higher education in Human Rights
UNAs can get copies of letters sent by HC to the Ministry in each country.
- Through materials, documentation and publications produced by OHCHR for schools especially for targeted groups training and education.
- Through information sharing and networking on HR education, contacts, training material, resources collection, databases of organizations working on HR, etc. And the other way around, UNAs can inform the OHCHR about their projects and ask about partnership. The OHCHR has contacts in each country.
- Major events
High Commissioner is a coordinator, therefore she can send opening messages and provide high-level support. Local offices and staff of the OHCHR can also be made available for these events.
- Financial support
OHCHR provides grants to a maximum of 5,000 dollars to NGOs and/or local associations acting in the area of HR education and training. Nevertheless, these grants are valid only for certain developing or transition countries.

The Global Compact (OHCHR)

Lene Wendland

Until 5 years ago, the relationship between the UN and the private sector was shaky. Kofi Annan took a strategic decision in January 1999 in Davos (World Economic Forum) when he announced the Global Compact.

By July 2000, 50 companies had signed the Global Compact to promote corporate social responsibility. Now, there are more than 2'400 participants worldwide and nearly 50 country networks that help the Global Compact initiative to move forward. Many of the stakeholders are located in developing countries.

During the past year, the Global Compact Office has held extensive consultations with representatives of all Global Compact participants and other stakeholder groups in order to reach a consensus on the details of the initiative. The need for a new governance framework is clear and pressing.

The Global Compact is managed from a permanent Office in New York. In addition to this, twice a year there is a meeting of the initiative's major stakeholders, to exchange information and advice. There are six agencies directly involved in the Global Compact: the ILO, the UNEP, the UNCPC, the UNDP, the UNIDO and the OHCHR. It is not an organization, but a network of networks. The compact represents the UN, NGOs, trade unions, CEO, etc. There is no structured hierarchy, meaning that everyone can have an impact on the decisions that are taken, even UNAs.

The Global Compact mainstreams 10 principles taken from internationally agreed conventions into day-to-day business principles. The principles concern:

- Human Rights (2 principles)
- Labour standards (4 principles)
- Environment (3 principles)
- Anti-corruption (1 principle)

The Global Compact has been criticised for providing a means through which companies can attempt to “bluewash” their corporate image, because there is no process in place to control or check if companies respect the UN principles they sign up for. This increases the danger that the Global Compact is perceived as a watered down version of the UN's ideals, and therefore damages the UN's credibility. However, it should be recalled that the Global Compact is not a compliance-based initiative; instead it is a learning process approach. Integrity measures have been adopted. For example, a company that signs up must provide information about the progress of the integration of principles within 2 years. If not, it is labelled as “Inactive”. Also, anyone can make a report to the Global Compact to complain about a company that does not respect the principles.

World Business Council for Sustainable Development (WBCSD)

Jacqueline Coté

The WBCSD is based in Geneva and the organization celebrated its 10th anniversary on 17 March 06.

The World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) in Johannesburg in September 2002 reconfirmed the MDG's and agreed on a Plan of Implementation for the Agenda 21 from Rio. The WBCSD's work programme explores the wide range of issues set out in the agenda, all crucial to achieving sustainable development.

The private sector has an important role to play if development is to be sustainable. The WBCSD's mission is to promote business leadership as a catalyst for change toward sustainable development, and to promote the importance of eco-efficiency, innovation and corporate social responsibility.

The objectives and strategic directions of WBCSD include:

- **Business leadership:**
To be the leading business advocate on issues connected with sustainable development.
- **Policy development:**
To participate in policy development in order to create a framework that allows business to contribute effectively to sustainable development.
- **Best practice:**
To demonstrate business progress in environmental and resource management and corporate social responsibility and to share leading-edge practices among our members.
- **Global outreach:**
To contribute to a sustainable future for developing nations and nations in transition.

The members of the WBCSD, 190 companies, are drawn from more than 35 countries and 20 major industrial sectors. They also benefit from a global network of 50 national and regional business councils and partner organizations involving some 1'000 business leaders globally. Moreover, ¼ of the membership of the WBCSD has signed the Global Compact.

The WBCSD works on a similar line as the Global Compact but there is no formal link between these two projects. The WBCSD supports the 10 principles of the Global Compact. The two organizations have regular contacts and co-wrote a publication.

World Health Organization (WHO)

Josephine Matsumoto

The WHO works with many different kinds of NGOs. It prefers to work with international NGOs but on specific subjects it receives information from national NGOs. The WHO's policy to cooperate with NGOs is to work with them as long as they are working in accordance with WHO projects and programmes.

The WHO has several European offices, which are located in capitals. If one of the UNAs activities is related to Health it should contact the concerned regional office to see if collaboration is possible. In transitional countries UNAs should visit liaison offices to introduce themselves and identify the areas, where they could collaborate.

It is possible to develop solid and constructive project. Therefore it is important for the UNAs to identify the different fields of work where the WHO has already been active: environment, human rights, public health, etc.

UNAs should also use WFUNA as an intermediate and International NGO to contact the WHO. If WFUNA wishes to identify areas of cooperation, it could contact Ms. Matsumoto who could forward the request to the concerned person.

International Labour Organization (ILO)

Karine Fenczak

Due to its unique tripartite structure, the International Labour Organization maintains a multifaceted relationship with the non-governmental sector, which involves the following:

- Integration of non-governmental social partners in the identity of the Organization itself
- According consultative status to international non-governmental organizations that meet certain criteria
- Collaboration at the operational level with a variety of international, national and local organizations.

As a tripartite organization, the ILO does not simply collaborate with non-governmental organizations but actually integrates sectors of civil society into its structure.

The individual employers and workers representatives at the Conference organise themselves into an Employers and a Workers Groups and (every three years) into an Employers and Workers Electoral College which elects the Employer and Worker members respectively of the ILO Governing Body.

The ILO promotes the development of independent employers and workers organizations and provides training and advisory services to those organizations.

In addition to the integration of national non-governmental social partners, the Constitution of the ILO also provides for consultative relations with those "recognized non-governmental international organizations, including international organizations of employers, workers, agriculturists and cooperatives".

The NGOs can be involved in one or more of the following fields:

- International Labour Standards and fundamental principles of Rights at work
- Decent employment and income opportunities
- Social protection for all
- Strengthening tripartism and social dialogue

Operational level

Along with the relationships with its non-governmental social partners and international NGOs in the various categories described above, the ILO collaborates at the operational level with many other civil society organizations.

Outreach activities

During the first week of the International Labour Conference, a special briefing session for NGOs is organised by the Office.

United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)

Andres Guerrero

In answer to the question what is UNICEF, the logo stands for “United Nations Children’s Fund”. The agency was set up as an emergency fund to help children after World War II.

7’000 staff members around the world work in national offices to make children’s rights a reality.

UNICEF’s priorities are:

- Girls education
- Immunization
- Children’s protection
- HIV/AIDS

UNICEF acts to ensure that each child has a chance to survive and develop in the best possible way. It is important to identify critical interventions in the life of the child from 0 to 18 so that it develops into full maturity

If a child is asked, “What is UNICEF?” the response will be different in wealthy countries where the symbol represents the UNICEF cards, and in poor countries where the same symbol represents the white car that comes to vaccinate children.

There are national committees for UNICEF that are NGOs at national level. Those NGOs have the right to use the logo of UNICEF for their promotion, to get accreditation, for fundraising, etc. UNICEF works out strategic partnerships with those NGOs, for example: IPU on child protection, partnerships with sport world, with interfaith org, with Youth org.

There are 2 types of partnerships

- Corporate
- Public sector

The UNICEF budget is not fixed; it is derived from funds received from governments and the private sector (1/3). Therefore it is important to work in partnership with the business world as well as with the public sector.

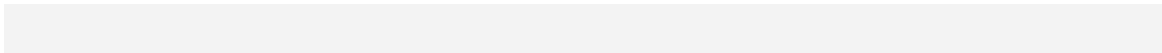
Lutheran World Federation (LWF)

Peter Prove

The LWF is a global community of Christian churches in the Lutheran tradition. Founded in 1947 in Lund, Sweden, the LWF now has 140 member churches in 78 countries all over the world representing 66.2 million Christians. It represents 5'000 staff members in the world in 30 countries. The headquarters is in Geneva and is made up of 70 staff members.

NGOs play a fundamental role in the functioning of the UN. It is NGOs and civil society, that join the different dots of the UN system, helping to make sure that one arm of the UN is aware of what the other arm is doing.

Prior to 1996 only international NGOs had a consultative status. Since 1996 there has been the possibility for both national and local NGOs to get consultative status with ECOSOC. This, of course is a good thing, but it makes it more difficult for civil society to agree on decisive action without reaching diluted positions. In collaboration with CONGO Mr Prove spoke about the NGO Information & Coordination platform (NGOIC - www.ngoic.org) which he has been working on. This is a web-based mechanism that has just been set up to facilitate information sharing and coordination among NGOs for the Commission on Human Rights/Human Rights Council.



POLITICAL DIVISION III, SWISS MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Introduction by WFUNA

It is important to remember that without the assistance of Mr Paroz, that is of the Swiss Ministry of the Foreign Affairs, this meeting would not have been possible.

Mr. Paroz – Head of United Nations Coordination Office

I thank you for giving me the opportunity to address you this morning and present you some thoughts and messages on behalf of the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs of Switzerland.

My intervention concentrates on 3 main topics:

- 1) UN reforms and civil society
- 2) The role of civil society in the Swiss UN policy
- 3) The support of Switzerland for the activities of United Nations Associations and their World Federation Office in Geneva

1) UN reforms and civil society

As you all know, the intensification of relations with parliaments, civil society and the private sector was supposed to form a significant part of the reforms proposals for the UN. The Cardoso Report, issued in June 2004, was indeed the first of the reports produced by the various panels mandated to feed the international debate on UN reforms.

Unfortunately, its recommendations are the one that have received the smallest level of follow-up in the decisions taken at the World Summit in September 2005. Switzerland favours a higher level of involvement of civil society in the activities of the UN, as do most of European countries. However, a majority of the Member States are opposed to this idea. Reforms in this area have encountered a great deal of resistance, even though it is accepted that civil society is in fact playing an increasingly important role in the UN.

The Cardoso Panel was seen in Switzerland as having not fulfilled one aspect of its mandate, which was to take into consideration the existing best practices in the UN – civil society relations. The Report did not take into consideration such experiences as the National UNESCO Commissions or the tradition of dialogue with representatives both of the workers and of the employers within the International Labor Organization. The United Nations Associations and their role were not a subject of special interest in the Report. They could have been considered as a particular stakeholder, but they were not.

After the presentation of the Report, several meetings have taken place in Geneva to examine how the interested Swiss authorities, the relevant services within the UN in Geneva, the UN Non-Governmental Liaison Service and NGO's could promote an

intensified interaction between civil society and the UN in Geneva. A concrete result will be the organization of a major Civil Society Forum preceding the next ECOSOC session, to be held in Geneva in July 2006. Another part of our efforts is to promote the role of the World Federation of United Nations Associations in Geneva. This will be the subject of the third part of my intervention.

2) The role of civil society in the Swiss UN policy

More generally, I would like to stress the fact that civil society plays a significant role in the determination of the Swiss policy in the United Nations. In order to promote a transparent presentation and an open discussion of the relations of Switzerland with the United Nations, the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs and the United Nations Association of Switzerland have developed a close partnership. The Swiss UNA is a strategic partner and plays a central role in the promotion of the debate with Swiss NGO's on the role of Switzerland in the United Nations. The annual Report of the Federal Council on Switzerland and the UN is discussed in the Swiss NGO Conference on Switzerland and the UN, to be held in the end of June each year.

Another important partnership is being developed with the Swiss Council for Youth Activities, which promotes, among other projects, the participation of our country in the « Youth Rep » project. The selected representatives of the youth are received in the Department of Foreign Affairs and in the Permanent Mission of Switzerland in Geneva for several trainings and meetings to get prepared for their participation in the General Assembly in New York.

But representatives of civil society are quite often even more than good partners for an open debate and an increased participation of civil society in UN affairs in Switzerland. They can also become essential actors in the development and implementation of major initiatives taken by Switzerland within the United Nations.

The best example so far is the important role played by professor Walter Kälin, of the University of Bern, in the setting of Swiss proposals for the reform of the Human Rights Commission and in the proposal to replace it by a Human Rights Council. I could also mention the role of the « Small Arms Survey » in the development of the Swiss initiative with regard to the struggle against the trade in small arms and light weapons.

3) The support of Switzerland for the activities of United Nations Associations and their World Federation Office in Geneva

The support for the activities of NGO's and for their delegates in Geneva is part of the host-country policy of Switzerland. A significant contribution in this regard is the support of Mandat International and its Welcome Center. Mandat International informs and helps delegates in their daily procedures (current conferences, accreditations, visas, etc); it offers support and advice in Public International Law; it acts as an interface between delegates and other international actors, as well as between the NGOs' needs and available human and academic resources.

Switzerland attaches therefore a significant interest in the fact that the historical seat of the World Federation of United Nations Association was established in Geneva and that the Office is conducting a dynamic programme of activities. In 2003, the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs has granted a contribution to promote the efforts of the Geneva Office to give a new impetus to its activities. Since then, we have actively encouraged the Swiss United Nations Association and the World Federation Office in Geneva to cooperate closely, including through the organization of common events.

The Federal Department of Foreign Affairs cannot provide a regular financial contribution that would cover personal or infrastructure costs. We consider that the long-term existence of the Geneva Office can only be ensured if the Office proves its capacity to provide its constituency, the United Nations Associations in Europe, with activities and support services that bring added value for the fulfilment of their tasks. We have noted with interest the recent developments in this regard, such as the annual seminar on human rights addressed specifically to representatives of the United Nations Association. Switzerland was glad to be able to participate in the financial support of the 2005 seminar. It is therefore with great enthusiasm, that we have encouraged the World Federation to organise this Symposium of European United Nations Associations. We are convinced that this symposium is a precious opportunity for the participants to conduct a fruitful exchange of experiences as well as to determine what could be the programme of action for the World Federation Office in Geneva in the next years, a programme with a high added value for them.

As far as Switzerland and the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs are concerned, I would like to extend to you the following messages:

- We are committed to continue to support the activities developed by the United Nations Associations and their World Federation in Geneva that correspond with our priorities.
- In this regard, the establishment of the newly created Human Rights Council should be seen as a new opportunity. Switzerland attaches great importance at this new body and at the role of NGO's in the work of the Council.
- Whenever some of your associations plan to organise a visit or any activity in Geneva, we would be pleased to contribute to its success, and to collaborate with your Geneva Office to this end. If you are interested to attend the Swiss NGO Conference on United Nations, we would be glad to welcome you. If a visit to our Ministry or our Parliament in Bern would be considered of any interest, or if you wish a presentation on specific topics for which our policy might be of special relevance, we would be glad to accommodate your requests. Again, we think that the future work of the Human Rights Council could be a matter of special interest for all of us in the future.

I thank you.

HOW CAN UNAS MAKE THEIR BEST USE OF THE WFUNA OFFICE IN GENEVA IN PURSUIT OF THEIR OBJECTIVES?

1. International Geneva

“International Geneva” has become the key forum of world negotiation, and a natural setting for intense diplomatic and networking activity. It is the home of many different types of organizations which are active in fields as varied as humanitarian aid, trade, human rights, environment and sustainable development, training and education, peace-keeping and security, meteorology, intellectual property, nuclear research, health, telecommunications and labour. The international community of Geneva, in the broadest sense, is made up of international organizations (governmental and non-governmental), accredited missions to the United Nations and other organizations and the staff who work for all these bodies.

Today 35,000 international diplomats and civil servants, not including some 2,400 employees of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) are working in this city.

Switzerland has been hosting international organizations for over 100 years. 22 international organizations with headquarters agreements are based in Geneva, including the United Nations Office at Geneva (UNOG) and United Nations agencies, such as the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) and others.

The United Nations Office at Geneva (UNOG) is the most active centre for multilateral diplomacy in the world and has been the setting of many historic negotiations. Of the over 8,000 meetings that take place annually at the United Nations Office at Geneva, more than half are open to NGOs.

Over 170 non-governmental organizations (NGOs) have their seat in Geneva.

155 foreign States (156 including Switzerland) are represented in Geneva by a permanent mission or representation to the United Nations Office and to other international organizations such as the World Trade Organization - WTO - and/or the Conference on Disarmament.

2. WFUNA in Geneva

WFUNA Headquarter has been based in Geneva since 15 October 1947.

On 6 October 1947 ECOSOC placed WFUNA in Category Two. To the then WFUNA’s Secretary-General, Mr Ennals, it was Category One or nothing, and he lobbied strongly for such a status. In 1948 by ECOSOC Resolution 133 (VI) WFUNA was placed as Category One among the NGOs.

Category One Consultative Status at ECOSOC entails:

- Participation in ECOSOC and its various subsidiary bodies through attendance at these meetings,
- Through oral interventions,
- Through written statements on agenda items of those bodies,
- Ability to propose new items for consideration by ECOSOC,
- Possibility to attend international conferences called by the UN, the General Assembly special sessions and other intergovernmental bodies.

UNAs, as members of the Federation, may benefit from the Federation's Consultative Status at ECOSOC.

WFUNA's Office moved several times within Geneva before a space was found within the United Nations Office at the Palais des Nations, in August 2002. Being the only NGO located within the Palais des Nations, the Federation and its members are now in a unique position, which provides:

- Visibility
- First hand information
- Easy access to conferences
- Vicinity to many UN agencies, programmes and offices

3. The main activities and projects of the WFUNA Office in Geneva in 2005/2006

WFUNA's activities in Geneva focuses on education, communications, promotion of the UN and of course services to the UNAs and its members.

3.1. High-Level International Seminars

These Seminars attract participants from United Nations Associations around the world, governments, local NGOs and the academic world due to their quality and substance as well as their established reputation. Each Seminar has attracted more than 250 participants.

- The Commission on Human Rights.

In cooperation with the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) and participation of Swiss Foreign Ministry.

UNA-Spain participated in the roundtable on the Human Rights Council

Free participation of more than 10 UNAs (Australia, Burundi, France, Ireland, Mauritius, Russia, Sri Lanka, Sweden, UK, USA, Venezuela)

- The International Criminal Court.

With the President of the ICC as keynote speaker and the participation of the Office of the Prosecutor.

Free participation of UNAs (Burundi, Canada, India, Iran, France and Luxembourg).

In 2006, the Seminars will be dedicated to the Human Rights Council and the Global Compact.

3.2. Annual Conference on The United Nations

In October 2005 WFUNA organised, under the patronage of the Office of the Director of the United Nations in Geneva, a Conference on the United Nations and the Future, followed by a celebratory Dinner in commemoration of the 60th Anniversary of the United Nations at the Palais des Nations.

The main speaker for this event was the Under-Secretary-General for Communications and Information, Mr Shashi Tharoor. The Conference benefited from international Experts in the fields of ethics, economic and legal matters.

Several European UNAs attended the Conference.

In 2006, the Conference could be related to the celebration of the 60th Anniversary of WFUNA

3.3. Model United Nations

WFUNA works in cooperation with students from the Graduate Institute of International Studies (HEI) to organise the Geneva International Model United Nations (GIMUN), which brings together university students from all over the world to the Palais des Nations, to study the processes of the United Nations.

In the 2006 session, students recommended by UNA-China and UNA-Russia were among the selected participants.

2 interns from WFUNA office also integrated the delegations.

3.4. The WFUNA Task Force on the World Summit on the Information Society

WFUNA has been involved since 2003 with the activities related to the World Summit on the Information Society. It integrated the WFUNA Task Force on WSIS that is coordinated by UNA-Denmark. The Task Force is constituted of the United Nations Associations of Denmark, China, Mozambique, Uganda, Venezuela, Ecuador, Pakistan. This project brought participants to Geneva many times over the last three years to attend the different phases and Conferences associated with the Preparatory Process for the Summit. For almost 3 years, the office has brought support to the Task Force on a regular basis in many ways:

- Logistical support,
- Financial support,
- Translation and edition of documents,
- Communication and information within the Federation,
- Networking.

WFUNA Deputy Secretary-General attended the Summit in Tunisia in November where she spoke on behalf of Civil Society on the human rights issue.

The Task Force on WSIS met in Copenhagen in February 2006 to discuss on follow-up activities to the Summit and agreed on implementation activities.

3.5. UN at School Project

In association with the Swiss Foreign Ministry, WFUNA completed an awareness raising pilot project on the UN for the students of one elementary and secondary school: over two days in October 2005, 400 students received information about the values and principles of the United Nations.

The second phase of the project is being carried out by the 'Conseil Suisse des Activités de Jeunesse' (CSAJ) with the support of WFUNA, UNA-Switzerland and the Swiss Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The objective of the project is to create an educational tool aimed at students, teachers and youth in Switzerland with pertinent information on the UN.

For the duration of the project, our office monitors and guides the research of an intern on UN related information.

3.6. Internship Programme

The WFUNA Office provides placements throughout the year for Interns from both within Geneva and internationally. These Interns are afforded the opportunity to gain first hand experience with an NGO dealing very closely with the UN system. Interns have attended the Human Rights Commission, the Human Rights Sub-Commission, the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) preparatory process, and been involved in information, education, lobbying activities and the organization of conference.

In 2005 Geneva welcomed 11 interns from France, Germany, Italy, Switzerland, UK, USA and Vietnam.

Since the beginning of 2006 Geneva has hosted 7 interns from Armenia, Switzerland, China and Albania.

3.7. United Nations Associations Participation to Conferences in Geneva and Special Visits

Members of the United Nations Associations actively participate in United Nations Conferences held in Geneva, such as the Commission on Human Rights, the Sub-Commission, Human Rights Committees, Special Sessions of the Commission as well as in annual meetings organised by WHO, ILO, WIPO, and ITU. This constant flow of members of national UN Associations to the city of Geneva is facilitated by WFUNA.

To mention a few: UNA-Denmark, UNA-Cuba, UNA-Australia, UNA-Germany, etc.

In addition, our Office has received throughout the year several groups of visitors. These groups were composed of 30 people each and they visited all the United Nations Agencies including the World Trade Organization (WTO) and the Swiss Authorities. Some took a special tour illustrating the functioning of the government of the Republic and Canton of Geneva.

The United Nations Association of the United States

The United Nations Association of Venezuela

On the request of UNA-UK, our office organized in February a roundtable on the theme “How the NGOs lobby the United Nations” for a group of 50 students from the School of Oriental and African studies.

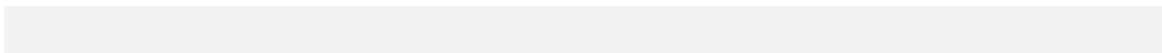
4. RUNIC

The Regional United Nations Information Centre (RUNIC) for Western Europe became operational on 1 January 2004, after the decision by the United Nations to close 9 United Nations Information Centre (UNIC) in Western Europe. It was decided by the Department of Public Information that the new modus operandi of the RUNIC would be based in part on a closer partnership with civil society.

An agreement was signed between the UN Under-Secretary-General for Communication and Public Information, Shashi Tharoor and WFUNA on 11 December 2003, by which the United Nations Associations in Western Europe agreed to serve as focal points and counterparts of the RUNIC at the national level by providing assistance with respect to a range of activities previously carried out by the UNICs.

These tasks include the organization of lectures and conferences on UN related topics and special UN Days. It also involves informing Civil Society about the United Nations, its programmes and responding to general enquiries concerning the countries it works with.

In February 2004, Shashi Tharoor sent a letter to each of the Ambassadors to the UN of the concerned countries to inform them of this situation: Belgium, Finland, Iceland, Ireland, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Norway and Sweden.



RECOMMENDATIONS MADE AT THE SYMPOSIUM OF EUROPEAN UNAS ON 17-18 MARCH 2006

The Symposium of European UNAs held on 17-18 March, organised by WFUNA and sponsored by UNA Switzerland, was arranged to facilitate the exchange of experiences and best practices between UNAs based in Europe and to facilitate discussion on common issues. Listed below are the recommendations made at this meeting, to be considered by the Executive Committee for further action by the WFUNA Secretariat.

1. Greater Cooperation between European UNAs

As those participating at the Symposium of European UNAs considered this initiative a success, it was recommended that Regional Conferences of European UNAs be revived and become regular institutionalised WFUNA events. This project would have the support of the UNA of Switzerland and the Swiss Foreign Ministry.

2. A Database of UNA Projects

It was recommended by the UNA of Serbia that for younger Associations trying to expand their programme of activities it would be useful to have a database of programmes and initiatives carried out by all UNAs and WFUNA. This would prevent UN Associations from “reinventing the wheel” each time they began a new initiative.

It was also recommended that with the help of this database WFUNA could provide letters of support for new initiatives when fundraising requests were being sent out, explaining that this initiative had been carried out by another UNA and indicating that it was a success.

3. Revision with UNDPI of the Memorandum of Understanding for UNRIC

It was heard at the Symposium, that the Memorandum of Understanding signed in 2004 by Shashi Tharoor and creating a UN Regional Information Centre has not been working as effectively as it could. It was requested that WFUNA in Geneva evaluates the effectiveness of the information services provided to each UNA through a questionnaire, and on the basis of this evaluation re-negotiates the Memorandum of Understanding to iron out existing problems.

ANNEXES

Annexe I	Agenda
Annexe II	Questionnaire
Annexe III	List of participants
Annexe IV	UN agencies in Geneva
Annexe V	Missions in Geneva
Annexe VI	ECOSOC Statues
Annexe VII	UNA-Italy's Project

ANNEXE I: Agenda

Friday 17 March

09.30-10.00

Welcome Statements

Ms. Bruna Faidutti – WFUNA Deputy Secretary-General
Mr. Christian Häberli – UNA Switzerland Executive Vice President

10.00-11.00

UNA Activities and Best Practices

Civil Society

10.00-10.30

UNA Switzerland

Discussion

UN Advocacy and Awareness Raising/Information

10.30-11.00

UNA Belgium & UNA UK

Discussion

11.00-11.15

Coffee Break

11.15-13.00

Presentation of UNA Activities and Best Practices

Model United Nations

11.15-11.45

UNA Bulgaria & UNA Serbia

Discussion

Education

11.45-12.30

UNA Slovenia, UNA Lithuania & UNA Ireland

Discussion

UNAs in Transitional Countries

12.30-13.00

UNA Poland

Discussion

13.00-14.30

Lunch

14.30-15.45 Presentation of UNA Activities and Best Practices*Millennium Development Goals*

14.30-15.15 UNA Albania, UNA Russia & UNA
Norway
Discussion

Inter-UNA Cooperation

15.15-15.45 Discussion

15.45-16.00 Coffee Break**16.00-18.00 Presentation of the Activities of UN Agencies and other
International Organizations in Geneva**

16.00-16.10 Ms. Elena Ippoliti – OHCHR Human
Rights Education

16.10-16.20 Ms. Lene Wendland – The Global Compact

16.20-16.30 Ms. Jacqueline Cote – WBCSD

16.30-16.40 Discussion

16.40-16.50 Ms. Josephine Susan C. Matsumoto – WHO

16.50-17.00 Ms. Karin Fenczak – ILO

17.00-17.20 Discussion

17.20-17.30 Mr. Peter Prove – LWF Civil Society
Networking

17.30-17.40 Mr. Andres Guerrero – UNICEF

17.40-18.00 Discussion

19.30 Dinner**Saturday 18 March**

**09.30-10.00 Mr. Paroz – Head of United Nations Coordination Office,
Political Division III, Swiss Ministry of Foreign Affairs.**

**10.00-11.30 How can UNAs make their best use of the WFUNA Office in
Pursuit of their objectives?**

11.30-11.45 Coffee Break

11.45-13.00 Conclusions and Recommendations

ANNEXE II: Questionnaire

Questionnaire for Meeting of European UNAs
To be returned by Monday 6 March

United Nations Association of

Name & Title of Executive Officer Attending

E-mail address

Telephone Number

Postal Address

- 1) Part of the Session to take place in Geneva will be experience sharing, do you have a particular project that you would like to present to the group of European UNAs? If so please summarise the details of this project.
- 2) Also for this section of the Meeting, is there a project being undertaken by another European UNA that you would be particularly interested to hear about?
- 3) Is there a UN Agency that you would be particularly interested to meet with?
- 4) Is there any item which you would like to add to the agenda for this meeting?

In the course of the meeting, WFUNA Geneva will be presenting its programmes and at the same time asking the question – What do UNAs want from the Secretariat? Please take a few moments to discuss this question with your colleagues before departing for Geneva.

We thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire, your answers will help ensure that this meeting is both relevant and useful to all involved.

ANNEXE III: List of participants

United Nations Associations

UNAs	Representatives	Email & Website
ALBANIA	Ms. Ina Gjikondi Ms. Dorina Xhixho	una_albania@yahoo.com xhixho1@etu.unige.ch Website: www.una-albania.org
AUSTRIA	Ms. Liselotte Waldheim - Natural	una.austria@afa.at Website: http://afa.at/una.austria
BELGIUM	Prof. Dr. Neri Sybesma-Knol	neri.sybesma@pandora.be Website: www.vvn.be
BULGARIA	Mr. Ivaylo Stoimenov	istoimenov@abv.bg Website: www.undp.bg/una
CZECH REPUBLIC	Ms. Pavla Kortusova	czechuna@czechuna.cz Website: www.czechuna.cz
ESTONIA	Ms. Maarja Toots	maarja@una.ee Website: www.una.ee
FRANCE	Mr. Guillaume Jeu	afnu.france@free.fr Website : http://afnu.france.free.fr/
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ANNEXE IV: UN Agencies located in Geneva

- **UNECE**, United Nations Economic Commission for Europe
<http://www.unece.org/>
- **FAO**, Food and agricultural organisation of the United Nations
<http://www.fao.org/>
- **IAEA**, International Atomic Energy Agency
<http://www.iaea.org/>
- **IBE**, International Bureau of Education
<http://www.ibe.unesco.org/>
- **ICC**, International Computing Center
<http://www.unicc.org/>
- **ILO**, International Labour Organisation
<http://www.oit.org/>
- **IMF**, International Monetary Fund
<http://www.imf.org/>
- **ITU**, International Telecommunication Union
<http://www.itu.int/home/index.html>
- **ITC**, International Trade Center
<http://www.intracen.org/index.htm>
- **JIU**, Joint Inspection Unit
<http://www.unsystem.org/jiu/>
- **UNAIDS**, Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS
<http://www.unaids.org/en/default.asp>
- **OCHA**, United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
<http://ochaonline.un.org/>
- **UNOHCHR**, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner on Human Rights
<http://www.ohchr.org/english/>
- **UNHCR**, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
<http://www.unhcr.org/>
- **UNICEF**, United Nations Children's Fund
<http://www.unicef.org/>

- **UNCC**, United Nations Compensation Commission
<http://www2.unog.ch/uncc/>
- **UNCTAD**, United Nations Conference on trade and development
<http://www.unctad.org/>
- **UNDP**, United Nations Development Programme
<http://www.undp.org/>
- **UNESCO**, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
<http://www.unesco.org>
- **UNEP**, United Nations Environmental Programme
<http://www.unep.org/>
- **UN-HABITAT**, United Nations Human Settlements Programme
<http://www.unhabitat.org/>
- **UNIDO**, United Nations Industrial Development Organization
<http://www.unido.org/>
- **UNIDIR**, United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research
<http://www.unidir.org/>
- **UNITAR**, United Nations Institute for Training and Research
<http://www.unitar.org/>
- **NGLS**, United Nations Non-Governmental Liaison Service
<http://www.un-ngls.org/index.html>
- **UNOPS**, United Nations Office for Project Services
<http://www.unops.org>
- **UNFPA**, United Nations Population Fund
<http://www.unfpa.org/>
- **UNRWA**, United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near-East
<http://www.un.org/unrwa/>
- **UNRISD**, United Nations Research Institute for Social Development
<http://www.unrisd.org/>
- **CEB**, United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination
<http://ceb.unsystem.org/>
- **UNV**, United Nations Volunteers Programme
<http://www.unvolunteers.org/>
- **World Bank**
<http://www.worldbank.org/>

- **WFP**, World Food Programme
<http://www.wfp.org/>
- **WHO**, World Health Organization
<http://www.who.int/en>
- **WIPO**, World Intellectual Property
<http://www.wipo.int/portal/index.html.en>
- **WMO**, World Meteorological Organization
<http://www.wmo.ch/index-en.html>
- **WTO**, World Trade Organization
<http://www.wto.org/>

ANNEXE V: Permanent missions represented in Geneva

A

Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria *, Azerbaijan.

B

Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium *, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi.

C

Cambodia, Cameroon, Canada, Cape Verde, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic.

D

Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Denmark *, Dominican Republic.

E

Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Estonia, Ethiopia.

F

Finland *, France (UNOG/CD)*.

G

Gabon, Georgia, Germany *, Ghana, Greece *, Guatemala, Guinea.

H

Haiti, Holy See (UN observer), Honduras, Hungary.

I

Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Ireland *, Israel, Italy * (UNOG, CD).

J

Jamaica, Japan (CD), Jordan.

K

Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan.

L

Latvia, Lebanon, Lesotho, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg *.

M

Madagascar, Malaysia, Mali, Malta, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Monaco, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar.

N

Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands *, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Norway.

O

Oman.

P

Pakistan, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal *.

Q

Qatar.

R

Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Rwanda.

S

San Marino, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia and Montenegro, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Somalia, South Africa, Spain *, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Swaziland, Sweden*, Syrian Arab Republic.

T

Thailand, The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Timor-Leste, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey.

U

Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland *, United Republic of Tanzania, United States of America, Uruguay, Uzbekistan.

V

Venezuela, Viet Nam.

Y

Yemen.

Z

Zambia, Zimbabwe.

Including Switzerland, 156 States are represented in Geneva

ANNEXE VI: ECOSOC Statues

WFUNA is a Non-Governmental Organization with Category One (General) Consultative Status at the ECOSOC.

What is consultative status?

Non-governmental, non-profit public or voluntary organizations may be admitted into a mutually beneficial working relationship with the United Nations by attaining consultative status with the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). This status is based on Article 71 of the Charter of the United Nations and on ECOSOC Resolution 1996/31 adopted in 1996. The rights and privileges enumerated in detail in ECOSOC resolution 1996/31, enable qualifying organizations to make a contribution to the work programmes and goals of the United Nations by serving as technical experts, advisers and consultants to governments and Secretariat. Sometimes, as advocacy groups, they espouse UN themes, implementing plans of action, programmes and declarations adopted by the United Nations. In concrete terms this entails their participation in ECOSOC and its various subsidiary bodies through attendance at these meetings, and also through oral interventions and written statements on agenda items of those bodies. In addition, organizations, qualifying for General Category consultative status, may propose new items for consideration by the ECOSOC.

Organizations granted status are also invited to attend international conferences called by the U.N., General Assembly special sessions, and other intergovernmental bodies. (The participation modalities for NGOs are governed by the rules of procedure of those bodies).

Currently there are 2719 NGOs in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC)

UNAs may participate in ECOSOC and its various subsidiary bodies through attendance at these meetings, and also through oral interventions and written statements on agenda items of those bodies. WFUNA will facilitate accreditation processes.

What is the difference between General category, Special category and Roster?

Organizations wishing to apply for General Category must be "concerned with most of the activities of the ECOSOC and its subsidiary bodies". These tend to be fairly large, established international NGOs with a broad geographical reach. Special Category is granted to NGOs "which have a special competence in, and are concerned specifically with, only a few of the fields of activity covered by the ECOSOC". These NGOs tend to be smaller and more recently established. Organizations, which "can make occasional and useful contributions to the work of ECOSOC or its subsidiary bodies" are included in the Roster. These NGOs tend to have a rather narrow and/or technical focus.

	General	Special	Roster
Relevance to the work of ECOSOC	all areas	some areas	limited
Are in consultative status with ECOSOC	yes	yes	yes
Attend UN meetings	yes	yes	yes
Designate UN representatives	yes	yes	yes
Invited to UN International Conferences	yes	yes	yes
Propose items for ECOSOC agenda	yes	no	no
Circulate statements at ECOSOC meetings	2000 words	500 words	no
Can speak at ECOSOC	yes	no	no
Circulate statements at ECOSOC subsidiary bodies' meetings	2000 words	1500 words	no
Can speak at ECOSOC subsidiary bodies' meetings	yes	yes	no
Must submit quadrennial reports	yes	yes	no

NGOs in consultative Status and UN NGO Liaison Office in Geneva

Of the over 8,000 meetings that take place annually at the United Nations Office at Geneva, more than half are open to NGOs. The Director-General, through the NGO Liaison Office, maintains liaison with non-governmental organizations in consultative status with ECOSOC and facilitates their participation in United Nations activities. The NGO Liaison Office

- provides information, advice and assistance to NGO representatives concerning matters discussed within the UN agencies as well as concerning ways of making a worthwhile contribution to their work;
- collaborates with NGO bodies, such as the NGO Conference, which play a consultative role in relation to the United Nations (CONGO) with the aim of developing mechanisms for more effective cooperation;
- helps permanent missions which are looking for information on NGOs and their relationship with the United Nations;
- ensures that NGO representatives are accredited to the United Nations Office at Geneva and enables them to attend meetings and conferences held at UNOG;
- helps in the preparatory work and takes part in seminars, working groups and conferences on subjects related to cooperation between the UN and NGOs;
- maintains a data base and publishes a list of contributing NGOs which enjoy advisory status vis-à-vis ECOSOC, giving their full details.

ANNEXE VII: UNA-Italy's Project

We would like to launch the idea of a project named “**UNAs exchange network**” in order to create and sustain an institutionalized information network acting as an interface between UNAs and the WFUNA office at the European level.

The core aim is to deepen the co-operation among European UNAs and between the UNAs and the WFUNA Office, and becoming significant actors in the pursuit of the purposes of the World Federation.

The mission of the network could be to:

- Actively promote a “**European exchange programme**” for graduates, encouraging them to take part as interns in the implementation of the European UNAs activities.
- Send feedback to the WFUNA Office about the work performed by the interns, in particular in support of activities related to UN events.
- Create an area on the web site (section UNA Members) coordinated and managed by the WFUNA Office, where to publish offers for hosting or sending interns.
- Support the WFUNA Office in the organization of important meetings by sending as interns some selected graduates for short or long periods.
- Create a **WFUNA Team** – a panel of independent speakers available for participation in seminars and conferences, debates and training sessions on the UN activities and programmes, as well as on the WFUNA activities. The list of the speakers could be circulated by mail or published in the web site and managed by the WFUNA Office acting as contact point.