

**United Nations Association of Australia  
(New South Wales) Inc.**

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**E News & Notes**  
*Volume 1: Jan – Feb 2010*

**From the President**



Your Association is constantly striving to improve its service to members while maintaining a tight control on expenditure. With this in mind we plan to supplement our high quality *News & Notes* publication with an electronic version *E News & Notes* which will appear bi-monthly.

The electronic version together with the website will be the principal vehicle for informing members of exciting program initiatives planned throughout the year. We will, of course post copies to people without email.

The Editor will be Pooja Kohli who will work with Danita Matusch, Director of Communications and a small Executive Committee. Pooja is an Honours graduate in Philosophy from Delhi University and has completed her Masters in Community Development from Sydney College of Business and IT.

Between 2006-07 she was President of the Gandhi Study Circle, a creative writing society at Delhi University. We welcome Pooja to the team.

Members are encouraged to contribute to both versions of *News & Notes*. I sincerely trust you find this new initiative interesting and informative.

Peter Airey

**For your diary:**

*26 to 28 February:*

**Sydney Multicultural Festival**  
Passmore Oval, Manly Vale.

The organisers hope to attract 30 000 people to this festival. The UNAA(NSW) will have a stall. A number of presentations will be made throughout the weekend as part of our efforts to promote the values of the UN to the Community.

Volunteers are sought. Anyone interested in helping on the stand or making a presentation should contact us preferably by email: [office@unaansw.org.au](mailto:office@unaansw.org.au) copied to [pairey@optusnet.com.au](mailto:pairey@optusnet.com.au)

*April- May:*

**Western Sydney outreach**  
coordinated by Ven Thich Minh Tam.

*June 2010*

**Annual General Meeting**

*13 August 2010*

**UNAA National Conference** NSW  
Parliamentary Theatre

The theme of the Conference is *The State of the World post Copenhagen*.

The keynote address will be delivered by the UNAA National President

### New Members

The Association welcomes new members interested in learning more and promoting the ideals of the United Nations.

An application form is on page 6.

Professor Robert Hill, a member of the Australian delegation to the Copenhagen Conference. global issues such as human rights, corporate governance, disarmament and the Millennium Development Goals will be aired. The proceedings will conclude with a general panel discussion and a reception.

On the previous afternoon, a half-day workshop on issues pertinent to the Status of Women will be held.

Expressions on interest in attending or volunteering should be sent to [pairey@optusnet.com.au](mailto:pairey@optusnet.com.au)

*September 2010*

The UNAA(NSW) will support the **Ministry for Peace** in their celebration of the **UN Peace Vigil**. The 2009 program may be viewed at <http://mfpa.org.au/?p=407>

*22 October 2010 (10:30 am)*

**Annual Cenotaph Ceremony**  
honouring Australia's contribution to UN Peace-keeping

*22 October 2010 (12:30 pm)*

**Annual UN Day Luncheon**

*24 October 2010 (UN Day)*

The UNAA(NSW) will support the **Rotary District 9750 plenary** session on the UN within its District Conference in Campbelltown.

*November 2010*

Post UN Week celebration in the Speakers Garden (to be confirmed)

### The Launching of the Mid-North Coast Branch of the UNAA(NSW)

The Mid North Coast Branch of the UNAA(NSW) is the initiative of the local Federal Member, Mr Rob Oakeshott MP who saw the need for an organisation with a broad focus on international affairs. Preliminary discussions on the establishment of the branch were held at a meeting in Canberra on 17<sup>th</sup> June 2009 between Mr Oakeshott, Ms Zita McGregor, Mr Geoff Little and Dr Peter Airey.

The launch took place on Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> October 2009 at the Falls Forest Retreat. The meeting facility and an



Launch of the Mid north Coast Branch on 11 Oct 2009 hosted by Dr Mary White at the Falls Forest Retreat. The Branch is the initiative of the Feral Member, Mr Rob Oakshott MP. The inaugural Chair is Ms Zita McGregor. Photo Mr G Little

afternoon tea were generously donated by the owner, the eminent author and environmentalist Dr Mary White.

Following short introductions by Mr Oakeshott and Dr Airey, all present were invited to introduce themselves. Many used the opportunity to explain the issues of particular concern and how the Branch may be able to help.

*Status:* The Branch was established subject to the endorsement of the UNAA(NSW) Executive at the Meeting

of 17 October 2009. Ms Zita McGregor was appointed as President of the Branch. Amongst the new members are Peter and Velvey Holden who have recently moved from the Central Coast to Port Macquarie.

I am sure all readers of News & Notes will join me in wishing the new Branch every success. Anyone interested in joining the Branch should contact Zita at [Zita.McGregor@aph.gov.au](mailto:Zita.McGregor@aph.gov.au)

Peter Airey

### UN Day Celebrations 2009

The Association celebrated UN Day on Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> October with the traditional Ceremony at the Cenotaph followed by the UN Day Luncheon.

The Cenotaph Ceremony honours Australian uniformed personnel who contributed to peace-keeping operations over the past 62 years under the UN banner. The Cenotaph Oration was delivered by Major General (retired) Tim Ford AO who is currently Chairman of the Australian peacekeeping Memorial project (see separate article). The ceremony was coordinated by Mr Geoffrey Little JP who also sang the United Nations Anthem accompanied by the NSW Department of Corrective Services Band. A Tri-Service Cadet Corps Catafalque Party from Pittwater House was arranged through Australian Army Cadet Brigade Headquarters.



Mr R J Ellicott QC, Dr Affie Adagio and Mr Geoff Little JP at the UNAA Luncheon

level. He considered Australia's signing of the UN Charter to be an early exercise of our full nationhood.

Mr Ellicott was followed by a number of short presentations from people of special interest to members. Mr Jay Jethwa, Executive Committee WFUNA spoke on the World Federation's goals and programs; Mr Chris Woodthorpe, Director UNIC extended greetings from his office and the UN system more broadly; Major General Ford presented and update on the Peace-keeping Memorial Trust; Mr Denis Percy, National President of the UN Police Association Australia provided



Cenotaph Ceremony 2009

Photo: G Little

fascinating insights into peace-keeping on the ground and Mr David Brawn Governor, Rotary International District 9750 for 2010-2011, spoke on Rotary and the UN and plans for a joint UNAA(NSW)/Rotary celebration in Campbelltown.

The 45<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the first contingent of the NSW Police to Cyprus was celebrated with a commemorative certificate presented in the presence of the High Commissioner for Cyprus.



Representing UN Peacekeepers at the annual Wreath Laying Ceremony - Left to Right - Mr. Denis Percy, UNPAA, Cmdr. David Stewart, AFP Manager, Sydney District, Mr. Geoffrey B.W.Little JP, UN Day Convenor and VP, UNAA(NSW), Det. Insp. Phil Jones, Police Liaison Officer, NZ Consulate General, Supt. Michael Kelsey AFP HQ, Sydney, and Asst. Com. Peter McErlain, NSW Police.

Congratulations are due to our Co-vice President Mrs Dianne Sackerariou for a successful raffle. Special thanks are offered to our volunteers and the catering staff who all contributed to the success of the event.

The Association was honoured by an invitation from the Speaker of the NSW Parliament the Hon Richard Torbay MLA for an afternoon tea in the Speakers Garden on 6 November 2009. This traditional event is a fitting climax to our UN Week celebrations.



UNAA Afternoon Tea: Speakers Garden NSW Parliament (6 Nov 2009). The guest speaker was Mr Miles Mooney (Blue Beret) front row, second from left.

### **Member's Contribution**

#### **FROM GRIEF TO HOPE**

Visit by the Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples

By

*Waratah Rosemarie Gillespie*

Professor James Anaya, the Special Rapporteur on the rights of indigenous peoples who visited Australia in August, has left his mark. The gentle Apache noted that indigenous communities here “endured tremendous suffering at the hands of historical forces and entrenched racism.”

Racism is a dirty word; it casts a shadow across the face of Australia, real but rarely acknowledged. The hysterical reaction to the UN Rapporteur's observations was predictable; many were shocked to see Australia's soiled linen washed in public.

Contradictory moves by government give cause for surprise and confusion, for example:

- (1) making an apology to the Stolen Generations while denying compensation to the victims;
- (2) signing the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples while continuing the Northern Territory Intervention (it discriminates against Aboriginal people on the basis of race and violates provisions of the Declaration and international human rights treaties to which Australia is a party).

The grief, hardship and suffering endured by Aboriginal people, who once walked proud and free in their own land, is immeasurable. Anaya's visit brought a ray of hope.

"During my time in Australia" he said, "I have been impressed with demonstrations of strong and vibrant indigenous cultures and have been inspired by the strength, resilience and vision of indigenous communities determined to move toward a better future ..." He was deeply moved by a Yuendumu woman, awarded an Order of Australia for stamping out petrol sniffing in her community, now suffering under the discriminatory income management system imposed by the Intervention.

On Reconciliation, Anaya spoke of "a need to move deliberately to adopt genuine reconciliation measures, such as the proposed recognition of the rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in a charter of rights to be included in the Constitution".

*From grief to hope, is Australia ready to make the change?*



About the author:

Waratah is a barrister who has devoted her life to the betterment of

indigenous peoples and has been involved in a number of anti-war campaigns (including support of the Bougainville women behind the lines and as a human shield in Baghdad). Waratah's most recent book is "Running with Rebels – Behind the lines in Bougainville's hidden war" (Ginibi Publications 2009).

Editorial note: Professor S James Anaya is a UN Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms of Indigenous Peoples. He visited Australia in August 2009 to observe the situation of indigenous peoples throughout the country. His formal report is pending. A statement at the conclusion of his mission may be viewed at <http://www.unhchr.ch/hurricane/hurricane.nsf/view01/313713727C084992C125761F00443D60?opendocument>

**UNAA(NSW) Members serving the UN**

We were delighted to welcome Julie Marks back to Sydney if only for a few days. She is currently serving with the UN Environment Programme in Nairobi. Julie and her colleagues within the Division of Communications and Public Information spearheaded the *Seal the Deal* campaign leading up to the Copenhagen conference.

After an enjoyable but hectic year in Nairobi, Julie is looking forward to a short term assignment to Geneva. Her next major project will be the promotion of *World Environment Day* in June.

Editorial note: We would be delighted publish notes on any of our members currently serving with the UN. Please send any information to [office@unaansw.org.au](mailto:office@unaansw.org.au)

**Next Edition**

The next edition will feature special articles on the National Conference, the AGM and will inaugurate a Social and Events page.

**MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FORM**

Subscription for one year's membership to the United Nations Association of  
Australia (NSW) Inc.

**PLEASE PRINT**

**Mr./Mrs./Ms./Miss/Other..... Your Occupation .....**

**First Name/s.....**

**Surname.....**

**Address.....**

**State .....Post Code..... Country.....**

**Telephone: Home:..... Business:..... Fax.....**

**Mobile..... Email.....**

**Special Interests in UN: .....**

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Secretary UNAA (NSW)  
PO Box K229 Haymarket NSW 1240**

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**Expiry Date: ...../..... Signed.....**

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**If you prefer to receive a membership application form by post, please inform  
UNAA (NSW) of this preference and of your postal address.  
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