

London & South East Region

Resolutions for discussion at Policy Forum on 10.30am-1.30pm, 27th February 2021, by Zoom

A. Introduction	1
B. Resolutions and updates to be considered on February 27 th	2
i) New topics	2
1. Arms Trade impacts on the lives of women and children	2
2. Financial levy for clean water	3
3. Climate change and its impact on Small Island Developing States (SIDS)	3
4. Maximising the impact of the UN's work	4
5. Our world after the pandemic	4
6. Promoting peace	5
7. Strengthening training and leadership for UN peacekeeping and peace-building missions.....	5
8. UK Aid budget	6
9. Vaccination for Palestinians living in the occupied Palestinian territory (oPt).....	6
ii) Updated or amended resolutions.....	7
10. Sri Lanka	7
11. Women, Peace and Security	8
iii) Topics on which the Policy Committee would welcome further proposals	9
12. Recognising ecocide as an international crime.....	9
13. Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (SAR)	9
14. Human Rights.....	10

A. Introduction

This year we will continue the practice of discussing policy resolutions from UNA members, supporters and groups at a Policy Forum open to all UNA members and supporters from London & South East Region plus invited guests from elsewhere. Any resolutions that are agreed will become the policy of UNA London & South East Region. They will be presented to the UK government and to UNA nationally with the suggestion that they become national UNA policy as well.

The Regional Policy Committee has met and combined (and in some cases shortened or edited) the resolutions submitted to form an agenda for discussion which is set out below. Resolutions focus on calls for action by the UK government or the UN.

We now invite members and branches to submit any amendments they would like to make in writing by Sunday 21st February at 6pm to webster.home@btinternet.com.

Amendments should state clearly which of the numbered clauses in a resolution they wish to delete or edit. In the case of “edits” they should say which words or phrases should be deleted or replaced by other words, and which words or phrases added. Additional clauses can also be added, as long as they are brief and on the same subject, rather than introducing new subjects.

The Policy Committee will combine these to form the final agenda.

Example amendment

Amendment to resolution 1. (“Name of resolution”)

- a. Delete clause 4 (“to do X & Y”)
- b. In clause 5 replace “what is says now” with “what you want it to say”
- c. Add a new clause “Whatever you want to add”

B. Resolutions and updates to be considered on February 27th

i) New topics

1. Arms Trade impacts on the lives of women and children

UNA London & South East Region:

- a. Recognising that women and children suffer disproportionately through armed conflicts which depend heavily on the arms trade, and the proliferation of small arms,
- b. Deeply concerned that that the UK may be in breach of the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT), by continuing to sell arms to authoritarian regimes such Turkey and Saudi Arabia who directly and indirectly target women,

Calls upon the UK Government:

1. To cease all arms sales to countries (such as Turkey, Saudi Arabia) who violate international human rights and humanitarian laws, targeting women, including their own citizens, directly or indirectly in armed conflicts;
2. To ensure that women comprise at least half of the UK parliamentary committees monitoring arms exports: International Development (currently 4/11); Foreign Affairs (2/11); Defence (2/11); International Trade (1/11)), and of the Department for International Trade’s Export Control Joint Unit;
3. To support judicial review of UK arms sales to regimes wherever there is firm evidence of human rights violations, and especially violence against women and girls or sexual violence;
4. To work with UK Women’s NGOs on the impact of UK arms exports on women and girls;
5. To cease co-hosting UK Arms Trade Fairs with states that violate human rights and humanitarian laws in conflicts.

Proposed by Juliet Colman on behalf of a number of members & supporters

2. Financial levy for clean water

UNA London & South East Region:

- a. Concerned that every day international financial transactions and markets generate millions of dollars in profit, a large proportion of which are entirely speculative, and do not create real wealth,
- b. Deeply concerned that such transactions create little income for the wider population,
- c. Noting that a 0.05% levy on such transactions would yield enough income to ensure that every man, woman and child on the planet had access to clean water and sanitary provision,
- d. Conscious of the need to control international health issues that can exacerbate global pandemics,
- e. Keeping in mind that in 2016 both China and the US Democratic presidential candidate urged similar measures,

Calls upon the UK government

1. To work for the adoption by the UN of an international agreement to impose such a levy on all financial transactions over £100,000, including high frequency transactions;
2. To set up, with the income thus generated, a special fund to ensure that every man, woman and child on the planet gains access to clean water and sanitary provision.

Proposed by five members of Blackheath & Greenwich UNA

3. Climate change and its impact on Small Island Developing States (SIDS)

UNA London & South East Region notes in the context of the forthcoming COP26 that:

- a. in 2020, the UN General Assembly adopted both:
 - i. the 'Follow-up to and implementation of the SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action (SAMOA) Pathway, and
 - ii. the Mauritius Strategy for the Further Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of SIDS',
- b. the majority of SIDS are members of the Commonwealth,
- c. a recent UNDP report records only 31 Member States who have submitted their National Adaptation Programmes of Action (NAPA) to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change of which only 8 are Commonwealth members with only 6 SIDS,
- d. at the Climate Adaptation Summit (January 2021) the UN Secretary-General, warned of the need for a breakthrough on adaptation and resilience,
- e. that the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) will take place in Kigali in June,

Urges the Commonwealth Secretariat and Commonwealth Member States

To adopt bold proposals in Kigali which address the particular challenges facing SIDS to table for discussion at the UN Climate Change Conference (COP26).

submitted by Westminster UNA

4. Maximising the impact of the UN's work

UNA London & South East Region:

Recognising the value of a continuous focus on good practice, and alignment of efforts across the UN system to maximise the impact of its work,

Calls on the UN to maintain a focus on:

1. Identifying and combatting the root causes of problems globally;
2. Encourage in country projects to be community-led;
3. Establishing global reward and recognition schemes to incentivise change and embed goals such as SDGs in economic systems (for example the food system);
4. In work requiring social transformation, working with all members of civil society, particularly marginalised groups, to build a social revolution that promotes shared ownership and responsibility;
5. Ensuring that youth is represented even in the highest fora, despite local and national cultural obstructions;
6. Adopting multi-stakeholder approaches to new challenges (such as digital issues) including a wide range of actors such as companies, civil society, NGOs and human rights watchdogs.

Drawn from the outcomes of WhatNext4UN

5. Our world after the pandemic

UNA London & South East Region:

- a. Mindful that over 2m people have died worldwide from COVID-19,
- b. Aware that lockdowns are economically ruinous and are impacting disproportionately the lives of the poor and vulnerable,
- c. Acknowledging that many countries were ill-prepared for the crisis,
- d. Regretting that member states gave priority to national action over a co-ordinated international response,
- e. Conscious that the WHO's mandate is to inform rather than to direct global health policy,

Calls upon the UN:

1. To set up a task force to develop a blueprint for the management of future pandemic outbreaks, including:
 - i. The fair and equitable distribution of all available vaccines globally;
 - ii. Measures to mitigate the spread of the virus that are proportionate to the severity and limited to the duration of the crisis in conformity with the fundamental principles of human rights;
 - iii. Financial support for countries least able to withstand severe economic trauma;
2. To undertake an extensive audit of Member States' responses to the pandemic in order to explain its origins and causes and to propose ways of preventing similar catastrophes;
3. To strengthen the WHO to enable it to lead proactive monitoring and intervention to halt potential pandemics, as well as to coordinate pandemic responses;
4. To strengthen the legal obligations of all member states to take all possible steps to prevent the spread of communicable diseases (to safeguard its own residents, as well as the populations of other countries) and to give early full, accurate and honest information to the WHO to enable it to take appropriate action.

submitted by Westminster UNA
additions from WhatNext4UN

6. Promoting peace

UNA London & South East Region:

Recognising the importance of promoting a Culture of Peace,

Calls on the UN to:

1. Encourage nations to strengthen the capacities of education institutions and other civic society bodies to raise awareness of conflict prevention and peacebuilding;
2. Encourage negotiators in all settings to respect, understand and take account of each others' interests, and share publicly evidence to that effect as part of reaching mutually acceptable outcomes;
3. Encourage media regulatory reform which promotes post-conflict peace settlements and their implementation, and which restricts the use of the media for non-inclusive factionalism;

Drawn from the outcomes of WhatNext4UN

7. Strengthening training and leadership for UN peacekeeping and peace-building missions

UNA London & the South East Region:

- a. Firmly believing that effective UN peacekeeping and peacebuilding is the best and most cost-effective way to maintain international peace and human security,
- b. Noting that 45 UN Member States host members of the International Association of Peacekeeping Training Centres (IAPTC),
- c. Further noting that whilst the UK:
 - i. Is the fifth largest contributor to UN peacekeeper operations budget and a P5 member,
 - ii. has agreed to the UN Action for Peace (A4P) Declaration of Shared Commitments on Peacekeeping Operations,
 - iii. has troops serving with the UN in Mali, and previously in South Sudan and Somalia,
 - iv. seeks to be a stronger force for good in the world in a post-Brexit 'Global Britain',
- d. it is only the thirty-seventh Troop Contributing Country (TCC) by numbers and has no dedicated UN Training facility,

Urges the UK government to:

1. Increase troop and police numbers for UN Peacekeeping duties as a responsible P5 member and to share its valuable expertise;
2. Assist the UN Department for Peace Operations by increasing support for its Integrated Training Service (ITS);
3. Establish a dedicated Peacekeeping Training Centre to prepare troops, police and civilians of all ranks/grades, both from the UK and other TCCs, for UN Peacekeeping deployments.

Submitted by Westminster branch

8. UK Aid budget

UNA London & South East Region noting that:

- a. The UK is one of the P5 at the UN and therefore must lead by example,
- b. the Covid pandemic has decimated progress achieved by the millennium goals and the Sustainable Development goals and has increased poverty,

Calls upon the U.K. government:

1. Retain its legal commitment to 0.7% of its GDP for aid spending and seek to maintain its pre-pandemic spend;
2. Direct aid to where it is most needed rather than to pursue short-term commercial interests;
3. Fully support a robust review committee on aid
4. Maintain strong capability and capacities to deliver aid effectively that were previously the mandate of DfID.

9. Vaccination for Palestinians living in the occupied Palestinian territory (oPt)

UNA London & South East Region noting:

- a. That Israel has vaccinated Palestinian prisoners, health workers and a number of Palestinians living in East Jerusalem,
- b. That a number of international organizations such as the WHO, are trying to secure and administer the vaccines in the oPt,
- c. That Israel has a legal responsibility to vaccinate the 5 million Palestinians she controls since her military occupation of the area,
- d. Under Article 56 of the 4th Geneva Convention, the occupying power has the legal responsibility to ensure that all citizens are vaccinated to 'combat the spread of contagious diseases and epidemics', which is not currently happening in Israel/Palestine,

Calls upon the UK Government and the WHO to:

1. Put pressure on the Israeli government to ensure a fairer distribution of the vaccine;
2. Highlight the two-tier health system which operates in the area;
3. Send observers to Israel to monitor and highlight the flaws of their health policies concerning the Palestinian people.

Submitted from Eastbourne branch

ii) Updated or amended resolutions

10. Sri Lanka

Proposal to replace the current resolution (restated below for information) with the following

UNA London & South East Region:

- a. Noting that it has been 12 years since the end of the war in Sri Lanka, and yet hardships and distress, affecting widows especially, continue in the North and East of the country, and restrictions on freedom of expression continue,
- b. Regretting the decision taken in February 2020 by the recently elected President to withdraw from the UN Human Rights Council's resolution 30/1 on reconciliation, accountability and human rights in Sri Lanka,
- c. Acknowledging the concerns of the Core Group on Sri Lanka about the prospects for accountability in Sri Lanka through domestic or hybrid mechanisms¹,

Calls upon the UK government

To sponsor a New Resolution at the 46th session of the UN Human Rights Council which:

1. Establishes an **International Independent Investigative Mechanism** to collect evidence of the most serious international crimes and violations of international law and to prepare files for criminal prosecution, which would take into account evidence from the Tamils affected by the genocide and the evidence in the OISL Report of September 2015;
2. Urges the UN Security Council and the UN General Assembly to **refer it to the International Criminal Court (ICC)** to investigate the crime of genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity;
3. Mandates the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) to continue to monitor Sri Lanka for ongoing violations and to establish a field presence in country.

submitted by a number of civil society Tamil and other minority groups and Blackheath & Greenwich UNA

Current resolution for reference

UNA London & South East Region:

- a. *Noting that it is 11 years since the war in Sri Lanka ended and the hardships and distress of the North and East people, especially widows, is the same as before, and that restrictions on freedom of expression remain,*
- b. *Regretting the decision in February 2020 by the recently elected President to withdraw from the UN Human Rights Council's resolution 30/1 on reconciliation, accountability and human rights in Sri Lanka,*

Calls upon the UK government

To press for rapid implementation of calls for an international, independent judicial investigation in line with the UN Human Rights Council resolution of 2015 into the crimes

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/un-human-rights-council-45-statement-on-behalf-of-the-sri-lanka-core-group>

committed by both parties (i.e Sri Lanka Government and Liberation Tigers of Tamil Ealam [LTTE]) to expedite the Peace and Reconciliation Process, in the belief that such international involvement will help the people in the North and East to build some trust and faith in the outcome of the investigation.

Agreed 25th November 2017 and amended May 16th 2020

11. Women, Peace and Security

UNA London and SE Region:

- a. Recognising that Security Council Resolution 1325 (and those which followed) are essential to the protection of women in conflict and to the achievement of international peace and security and welcoming the government's commitment to this agenda over time including the UK's 4th National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security,
- b. Welcoming the commitment to strengthen the UK capabilities in Strategic Outcome 7 of the National Action Plan, but concerned that no indication of the budget has been given for this important initiative,

Calls upon the UK government and the Security Council:

1. To apply a human rights based approach as a framework for the future work on Women, Peace and Security including economic and social rights rather than focussing only on security considerations;

Calls upon the UK government:

2. To include the role of the Arms Trade Treaty UNATT and also the post conflict situation in Northern Ireland within the scope of work on Women, Peace and Security;
3. To examine how upholding the rights of refugees and asylum seekers coming to the UK can advance the Women, Peace and Security agenda and make necessary adjustments;
4. To ratify the Istanbul Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence;
5. To appoint a special envoy for Women, Peace and Security at the new FCDO;
6. Provide adequate provision of funding for implementation of the National Action Plan;

Calls upon the Security Council:

7. To adopt a periodic review of resolution 1325 incorporating updates to reflect innovatory practice from local, regional and national level;
8. To support a significant provision of financial resources to women's NGO's at all levels who are working to prevent armed conflict;

On Mediation/Peace Building

Calls upon the UK government:

9. To encourage funding, promote training and work towards the establishment of international professional standards for international peace mediation monitors;
10. To call for the provision of gender training for all UN peace mediators;
11. To ensure greater use by the UN of women-led negotiations;

Calls upon the Security Council:

12. To enable the UN Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs (UNDPPA) to strengthen partnerships with women NGO peace makers;

On Peacekeeping

Calls upon the UK government:

13. To ensure a better gender balance in the UK armed forces, reserve forces and the UK Cadet Class Association;
14. To expand gender training conducted by the British Peace Support Team;
15. To show global leadership by both advocating the provision of, and providing more female peacekeepers;

Calls upon the Security Council:

16. To encourage countries to allocate military and police officers to peacekeeping operations which include women at all levels;
17. To ensure standard and globally consistent training of peacekeeping troops. And to include gender training and proper screening of peacekeepers in relation to past behaviour;
18. To ensure there is a verifiable independent monitoring and accountability of peacekeeping forces from different countries.

Additions proposed by Juliet Coleman and a number of UNA members/supporters

iii) Topics on which the Policy Committee would welcome further proposals

12. Recognising Ecocide as an international crime

WhatNext4UN called on the UN to make Ecocide an International Crime, and so the Policy Committee would welcome proposal for a more specific resolution on this topic during the amendment process

13. Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (SAR)

The Policy Committee will consider any amendments to the existing policy on this topic in the light of events since it was agreed last May.

UNA London & South East Region:

- a. *Noting the deterioration of civil and political rights in Hong Kong and the challenges facing the 'one country, two systems' model agreed between the UK and China in 1984,*
- b. *Noting the mass peaceful protests for democracy and full implementation of the Basic Law, exercising fundamental rights to freedom of assembly and expression,*

Expressing deep concern about:

- c. *Incidents of violence on all sides,*
- d. *The sentencing of pro-democracy demonstrators and reports of police violence in HK in contravention of the Sino-British declaration,*

Urges the UK Government:

1. *To work with the Chinese government to fulfil the promises made during the handover;*
2. *To call for open dialogue between the Hong Kong authorities and people on this sensitive issue;*
3. *To grant UK residence to those with British National (Overseas) Citizenship in Hong Kong;*

4. *To restate the UK government's moral and legal responsibility to support democracy, the rule of law and human rights in Hong Kong;*
5. *To suspend (with our partners) all crowd control equipment export licenses to Hong Kong;*

Further urges the UK Government to work with the UN and all member states:

6. *To call for an immediate end to violence;*
7. *To ask the authorities for restraint and to protect the human rights and freedoms in the Basic Law;*
8. *To appoint a UN special rapporteur to investigate claims that demonstrators faced excessive force.*

Agreed May 16th 2020

14. Human Rights

WhatNext4UN called for the UN to “Strengthen accountability mechanisms to defend International Human Rights” so the Policy Committee would welcome specific proposal to do so in the form of amendments to our existing Policy resolution on Human Rights (below)

UNA London & South East Region:

- a. Welcoming the UK's leadership at the UN Human Rights Council on issues such as violence against women and girls, modern slavery, Sri Lanka and the mandate of the Special Rapporteur on Iran,
- b. Welcoming DfID's contribution of £2.5m to the Office of the High Commission for Human Rights noted in UNA UK's 2018/19 global scorecard,

Calls upon the UK Government:

1. To ensure that any future changes to UK human rights law strengthen, rather than weaken, universal human rights protections (including social and economic rights) in the UK and to refrain from introducing exemptions for acts taking place outside the UK;
2. To continue to seek to strengthen the Human Rights Council and engage constructively with all UN human rights mechanisms, including UN Special Procedures, responding positively (and with respect) across government to UN expert investigations and enquires;
3. To adopt an ethical foreign policy which prioritises the advancement of human rights as an aim in itself;
4. To desist from shielding allies where criticism is justified;
5. To ensure that aid spending takes account of human rights concerns;
6. To refrain from withdrawing from existing human rights commitments.

Agreed 24th November 2018