

[View this email in your browser](#)



UNA LASER Newsletter October 2021

From our Chair, Trisha Rogers



Afghanistan

Thanks to expert contributions from LASER members David Hannay, Ali Hessami, Neville Grant and Euan Grant (but with me taking full responsibility for any inaccuracies or distortions). LASER has summarised [the situation in Afghanistan](#) and calls on our members to write to their MPs to ensure that the UK government continues to work to reduce the shocking suffering - particularly of women, girls and minority groups - caused by the recent change in government in Afghanistan.

It is important, too, that we campaign to ensure that the Taliban government is held to account through the UN structures for any human rights abuses and other atrocities.

AGM

Our AGM will be on 20th November from **2:00pm** (NB not 12 noon, as it would have been if in-person!). With COVID numbers still high, we have decided it will be a virtual event, on zoom, like last year. We are delighted that **Dr Saleemul Huq, Director of the International Centre for Climate Change and Development**, will give us an update from COP26.

At our AGM we elect 6 members of our Executive Committee, as well as our Executive Officers (Chair, Secretary and Treasurer). The Committee meets about every two months: normally in central London; currently by zoom. If you would like to stand to be an Executive Officer or to be a member of the Executive Committee, please send our Secretary, [Jane Beeley](#), by 13th November, your nomination, which can be by any two members of the retiring [Executive Committee](#), a branch or any 6 members of UNA LASER. With your nomination, please send short biographical details (up to 150 words).

Officers, the Executive Committee, branches, youth groups, corporate members and any six members acting together may send in resolutions and other matters for the agenda. If you have any motions that you would like put to the AGM, please make sure they reach [Jane](#) by 13th November.

Please [register for the AGM here](#) by midnight on 19th November. We shall email out the papers for the AGM early on 20th November.

Newsletter

We would welcome a new Newsletter Editor. Please contact me if you have experience of editing and might be interested in taking on this role.

We'd like to rename this Newsletter. Some suggestions, punning on our name, 'LASER', include Spotlight, Focus and Highlight; but we'd like something particularly appropriate to UN issues. Suggestions, please, to [me](#)!

Many thanks to Peter and Sarah Webster for sending out this Newsletter. Material for the next newsletter should reach [me](#) by **24th November, 2021**.

COP26

Military Greenhouse Gas Emission

UNA LASER is among the signatories of [a letter](#) from the Arms, Militarization and Climate Justice Working Group to Nigel Topping, UK High Level Champion for Climate Action at COP26. In spite of the scale of their emissions, the military's contribution to climate change impacts is not part of official COP26 discussions in November 2021. It is important that governments should fully report the emissions of their militaries and that these should be on the agenda for COP27.

COP26 must deliver on Loss and Damage Finance

UNA LASER is among the signatories of a letter to the Heads of States, Environment Ministers, President of COP26, Alok Sharma and the Heads of Delegations at COP26. [This letter](#) stresses the importance of financing for past loss and damage caused by climate change, particularly for developing

countries.

Personal Actions Before and During COP26

The Climate Coalition (of which LASER is a member) calls on us all to “plant seeds of hope” during October and [let them know](#) the numbers of seeds you and your community has planted.

During COP26, LASER will share in the News pages of [our website](#) brief reports and suggested actions from COP26, so that we can all help to make these crucial meetings successful.

Branches' Activities

Eastbourne

Climate change mitigation requires two major actions:

1. Reducing carbon intensive consumption patterns – individually, commercially, nationally and globally – ranging from Individual decisions such as eat less red meat to National and International government policies for increased renewal energy sources.
2. Carbon capture – techniques and systems to take excessive atmospheric carbon out of the atmosphere.

If any branches are actively looking for a practical way to engage in carbon capture, UNA Eastbourne asks branches to consider giving their support to the UNA Eastbourne's well-established MVULE PROJECT FOR CARBON CAPTURE. The scheme is simple, efficient and very cost effective: for details go to [UNA Eastbourne website](#) and look under 'Projects'.

Bexhill and Hastings

Build Back Differently – for the Better. UNA-Bexhill & Hastings invites you to their free **in-person** 4th Annual United Nations Day Peace Event on **Saturday, 23rd October** from 1:30pm (formal programme 2 - 5:15pm) at **St. Peter's Community Centre, Church Street, Bexhill-on-Sea, TN40 2HE**.

To get out of Covid-19 and into a New World Normality, we should Build Back Differently – for the Better. In order to demonstrate this, we have designed a seminar/workshop event to create a comprehensive Out-of-Covid-19 Roadmap for use by the UNA, and other like-minded groups, for public education, campaigning and for lobbying Parliament. Light refreshments will be provided; please bring your own mug. To register and for more information, please contact [Sheila Kesby](#).

Canterbury

UN Flag-raising ceremony: On **24th October at 11:00** all are invited to attend in-person the UN Flag-raising ceremony at Dane John Gardens, Canterbury, with the Lord Mayor.

Cathedral Peace service: On **24th October at 17:30** LASER members are invited to join, **in-person**, the annual Peace Service in Canterbury Cathedral, with its procession of peace-makers. The service will also launch the *Canterbury Climate Action Week* in the run-up to COP26 in Glasgow the following week.

Luton

Climate Crisis: Faith in the Environment. UNA-Luton, in partnership with Luton Council of Faiths, Grassroots & Near Neighbours, invites you on **Saturday 23 October from 4.00pm to 6.00pm** to an international **webinar** to explore the Climate Crisis from the perspective of diverse faiths and beliefs - for respecting, preserving and protecting Nature and the Environment for the wellbeing of all life on our planet. Speakers, including local leaders and storytellers, come from diverse faith and belief backgrounds. [Here](#) is the Zoom link, with the Meeting ID 869 9952 9198 and the Passcode 835937. Please [RSVP](#) as soon as possible.

Westminster

Westminster UNA shares the following activities:



1. Celebrating Indigenous Languages – Defending Endangered Languages:

This hybrid **webinar** and **in-person event** on **10 December** (Human Rights Day) will preview the International Decade for Indigenous languages (2022-2031) and also mark the 25th anniversary of the Foundation for Endangered Languages (FEL). It follows the “*It’s my language, it’s my life*” conference organised by Westminster UNA and FEL in 2019.

The right to speak one’s language, to be educated in one’s mother tongue, to have access to social media in one’s own language is enshrined in many human rights legal instruments, but linguistic rights are still a long way from being enjoyed in most human societies. When better than Human Rights Day to celebrate the 25th anniversary of the Foundation for Endangered Languages? Details of the event and how to register will be posted on the Westminster UNA [Future Events page](#).

2. We The Peoples Film Festival in November:

Westminster UNA hopes to broadcast a limited programme of new films, using a French online platform. Currently, none of the festival’s traditional venues can be used. Details of the event and how to register will be posted on the Westminster UNA [Future Events page](#).

3. Religious Freedom in Afghanistan:

Westminster UNA, a member of the [UK Freedom of Religion or Belief Forum](#), has co-signed a letter sent to the Foreign Secretary in which *inter alia* ‘We call on the Government to request the protection and safety of those adhering to marginalised religions and beliefs whilst remaining in Afghanistan, by the insistence that FoRB be included in any negotiations with the Taliban government.’ The full text of the letter can be read on 23rd September entry on the [Westminster UNA news page](#).

UNA Climate and Oceans

UN COP26, expectations, challenges, goals and actions:

These UN COP26 High Level Fringe events will include experts from academia, politics, the private sector and civil society to share the challenges of COP26 during the different stages of the conference. During these **online events** there will be exclusive COP26 reports from the United Nations in New York, as well as interviews with VIPs and delegates attending UN COP26 (tbc).

Patron: **Sir Richard Jolly KCMG**; with **Young Voices** from around the world.

1. Thursday 28 October, 7pm - 8:30 pm, focusing on:

- **UN COP26 Goal 1: Secure global net zero by mid century and keep 1.5 degrees within reach**
- **UN COP26 Goal 2: Adapt to protect communities and natural habitats**

Panelists: **Professor Daniel Lunt**, Lead Author IPCC Report Climate Change 2021 (University of Bristol); **Dr Adriana Ford** - Leverhulme Centre - Imperial College/ King’s College, London; **Stuart Neaverson** - The Climate Coalition UK; **Dr Balasubramanyan Chandramohan** - Institute of Commonwealth Studies - University of London; **Julia Hilton** - East Sussex County Council Councillor - Green Party; **Simon McFarlane** - Seaford Environmental Alliance (Trustee).

2. Thursday 4th November, 7pm - 8:30 pm, focusing on:

- **UN COP26 Goal 3: Mobilise Finance**
- **UN COP26 Goal 4: Work Together to deliver,**

Panelists: **Dr Carl Wright**, Secretary-General Emeritus Commonwealth Local Government Forum, Chair, Canterbury Climate Action Partnership; **Dr Adriana Ford** - Leverhulme Centre - Imperial College/ King’s College London; **Dr Bengt Skarstam** - United Nations Association Malmö, UNA Sweden; **Stuart Neaverson** - The Climate Coalition UK; **Dr Balasubramanyan Chandramohan** - Institute of Commonwealth Studies - University of London; **Julia Hilton** - East Sussex County Council Councillor - Green Party.

3. Thursday 11 November, 7pm - 8:30 pm, focusing on:

The BIG question: Has COP26 delivered on the four goals? What’s next?

With a message from the **UN Secretary- General, Antonio Guterres**

Panelists: **Member of the UK Parliament** - Westminster (TBC); **Dr Adriana Ford** - Leverhulme Centre - Imperial College/ King’s College London; **Julia Hilton** - East Sussex County Council Councillor - Green Party; **Stuart Neaverson** - The Climate Coalition UK; **Dr Balasubramanyan Chandramohan** - Institute of Commonwealth Studies - University of London; **Dr Bengt Skarstam** - United Nations Association Malmö, UNA Sweden.

Young Voices from around the World: **Lara Hauge** - UNA Youth Ambassador (United Kingdom); **Olga Sobota** - UNA Youth Council (Poland); **Alex Ko** - UNA Youth Council (Taiwan); **Benson Daud** - UNA Youth Council (Tanzania); **Natasha Barnes** - UNA Youth Council (United Kingdom); **Evan Knowles** - UNA Youth Council (USA); **Chisanga Kapacha** - UNA Youth Council (Zambia); **Michele Ivone - Rodriguez** - UNA Youth Council (Spain)

Hosted by:

Gonzalo Alvarez, The Chair of the UNA Climate & Oceans (UK)
Citizen Responses with **Lindsay White** (CEO Community Supporters CIC)

To register, go to [the Eventbrite page](#)



**UN CLIMATE
CHANGE
CONFERENCE
UK 2021**
IN PARTNERSHIP WITH ITALY



**Imperial College
London**



COP26 Youth Marathon:

on 30th October, 3-7pm, UNA Climate and Oceans, with the Youth Council, is running an international webinar on COP26 to empower young people. This youth marathon will include workshops, speaker events Q&As, and arts show-casings.

**UNA CLIMATE
& OCEANS**

**YOUTH
MARATHON**

**A 24HR EVENT
OCTOBER 30**

@UNACLIMATEOCEANS

UNSPLASH - MALACHI BROOKS



Climate change is arguably the most pertinent issue our generation has to face, with imminent dire consequences unless adequate action is taken. This event will teach about climate change while preparing participants for their own climate change battles. "If we truly want change, we have to stand together and be prepared to fight."

Hosts: **Karl Birkholtz** (UNA Youth Council, South Africa); **Hannah Glowacki** (UNA Youth Council, Canada) Speakers and Workshops: **Natasha Barnes**, UK (UNA Youth Council) on *The global economy we need and the future of Green Business*; **Benson Daud**, Tanzania (UNA Youth Council) on *Climate Action in Tanzania*; **Ian Elgie**, UK, Chair UNA Eastbourne on *Mvule Tree Project, Uganda*; **Reuben Sapetulu**, Zambia, Deputy Secretary General UNA Youth Association) on *Climate change mitigation*.

For more information and to register, go to [the Eventbrite page](#).



Copyright © 2021 London and South East Region UNA, All rights reserved.

Want to change how you receive these emails?
You can [update your preferences](#) or [unsubscribe from this list](#).



