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UNA LASER February 2022 Newsletter

From our Chair, Trisha Rogers



Eirwen Harbottle

We are sad to report the recent death of Eirwen Harbottle, aged 100.

Eirwen was a lifelong campaigner for peace and security. She worked for the International Peace Academy, Centre for Human Rights & Responsibilities, the Kurds and Vietnamese Boat People. She led the World Disarmament Campaign (UK), including conceiving the youth musical Peace Child.

Eirwen saw security in its holistic sense: environmentally, socially, spiritually, with a special role for youth, women and the military. She co-founded, with her husband, Brigadier Michael Harbottle, the Centre for International Peacebuilding.



In 1984 Michael created 'Generals for Peace and Disarmament', an NGO accredited to the UN and nominated to the UN Messenger for Peace Award. On his death, Eirwen became the coordinator of this group and was a regular attendee at UNA Westminster's annual Peacekeepers' Day conference. Her daughter, Rosey Woollcombe co-founded Peace Child International, which joined with LASER to run our UN75 festival, [Building a More Secure World](#). Eirwen was our festival's first financial supporter and continued to work actively for peace. We shall miss her.

There will be a service remembering Eirwen at 11 am on Tuesday 22nd February at St. Mary the Virgin, Westmill and afterwards at Alswick, Buntingford.

Campaigns

Post COP26

We warmly welcome our new Campaigns Officer, Valeria Minisini, Chair of UNA Canterbury. The UK continues to be the President of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) until November. Valeria reminds us how important it is that the UK should energetically lead the continuation of the momentum from COP26. Please see [on our website](#) the guidance for encouraging your MP to keep up the pressure. (Ministers have to read and respond to letters from

MPs, so getting your MP to write is even more effective than writing to Ministers yourself.)

[Here's an animation](#) from the Climate Coalition (to which we belong) to encourage us all to keep being active in this crucial campaign. Get inspired through [their Action Pack](#). Don't forget that, later in the year, their [Great Big Green Week](#) (24th September to 2nd October) is an opportunity for each of us - and our branches - to link with community groups, NGOs and businesses to combine our campaigning effectiveness.

Ukraine

Led by LASER member and former BBC UN correspondent Keith Hindell, we have written to the Foreign Secretary to urge that, to calm the dangerous situation in Ukraine, full use is made of the UN Security Council, at which all member states have the right to present their views. See the letter [on our website](#), and do encourage your MP to repeat the message!

Branch Support

In these zooming times, many branches have found it helpful to run joint virtual events with other branches. You can find those near you [on our website](#). Branches can learn a lot from each other, as well as providing mutual support. We have collected ideas from branches of their wide range of activities and structures, these are [on our website](#). If you would like further support for your branch, please [contact us](#).

Spring and Summer Councils: Policy Conference

We are grateful to UNA Harpenden for hosting our **Summer Council** on **9th July**. Do put it in your diaries and see some more information at the end of this Newsletter.

Our **Spring Council** will be our **2022 Policy Conference**. This will be held at [Bermondsey Village Hall](#) (very close to London Bridge station) and by zoom on **23rd April** at **14:00**. Registration is required in advance for Zoom [here](#).

This is your chance to help decide what stance the Region should take on a wide range of international issues. Resolutions need to be on an international topic and must call for action by the UK government or the UN. They can also set out background facts or statements of concern that you would like the Region to support, and they can be put forward by UNA Groups or individual members. You can see our current resolutions for inspiration and for the framework we use [here](#).

New resolutions need to be 175 words or less in total. You can also suggest amendments to existing resolutions which should add not more than 75 words to the total length of the resolution.

The LASER Policy Committee, which organises the Policy Conference, will be proposing that our current resolutions number [3 & 4 on Climate](#) (which refer to the build up to Cop26), and [23 on Syria](#) (which calls for particular action by a specific date) will be "retired" at this Policy Conference, so fresh proposals on these two important topics are particularly welcome.

Please [send in draft policy resolutions](#) to our Policy Committee Chair, Peter Webster, by the **deadline of 5pm on Monday March 7th**.

Newsletters

Many thanks to Peter and Sarah Webster for mailing out this Newsletter. If you might like to help with future mailing (including being given useful training in Mailchimp), or with editing the Newsletter, please [let me know](#). In order to allow time for Policy Conference Resolutions to be processed and then shared, the deadline for announcements for the next Newsletter to [reach me](#) is 15th March.

Forthcoming Events

Warwick UNA

On **Tuesday 15th February, 19:00**, Warwick UNA is hosting a virtual meeting on **Russian and Ukraine**. The speaker will be **Dr Ruth Deyermund**, who works on Post-Soviet Security in the Department of War Studies at King's College, London. [Here](#) is the zoom link.

Harpenden UNA

On **Saturday 26th February, 11:00**, Harpenden UNA is hosting an in-person public meeting at the Salvation Army Hall, Leyton Green, Harpenden AL5 2TG. **Nichola Raihani**, Professor in Evolution and Behaviour at University College, London,

will speak on *The Social Instinct - How Cooperation Changed the World*. For further information, please contact [Suheil Shahryar](#).

Bexhill and Hastings UNA

On **Saturday 26 February, 10:00**, Bexhill and Hastings UNA is holding their **AGM**, followed by coffee and then, **at 11:00**, a talk by **Carl Wright** on *What has come out of COP26 and what can we do about it?*. The meeting will be at the Friends Meeting House, Albert Road, Bexhill TN40 1DG.

On **Earth Day, Friday 22 April, 11:30**, Bexhill and Hastings will host a **Peace Pole Gathering** at the Bexhill Peace Pole, Galley Hill.

For more information on this branch see [their Facebook page](#).

Wandsworth UNA, with Streatham and Clapham UNA

On **Tuesday 8th March, 19:30 - 21:30**, to mark International Women's Day, Wandsworth UNA, with Streatham and Clapham UNA are holding a virtual meeting on *The Role of Women in Peacekeeping*. Speakers will include **Lesley Abdela**, MBE, **Sagal Bafo** (from Peace Direct), Chair: **Catherine Pluygers**. [Here](#) is the zoom link (with ID 810 3836 8103 and passcode 199207). For more information, please contact [Catherine Pluygers](#), [Rob Story](#) or [Meena Storey](#).

**United Nations Association
Wandsworth and
United Nations Association
Streatham and Clapham
present:**

**Tuesday
8th March 2022
7:30 to 9:30pm**

*Role of
Women in
Peacekeeping and Peace Building
To
Celebrate International Women's Day*



**This is a ZOOM event. Please sign in early.
Topic: The Role of Women in Peacekeeping and Peace Building
Meeting ID: 810 3836 8103 / Passcode: 199207**

Register in advance for this meeting:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/join/register/tZUtdOGqDMrGtdBwim2kwIZzKzNJoQhi0IV>

Speakers

Lesley Abdela MBE

Gender Equality Expert Consultant, Advocacy Campaigner, Journalist, Broadcaster and Public Speaker

Sagal Bafo

Women's Rights Activist and Senior Programmes Officer at a Peace Direct

Chair

Catherine Pluygers

UNA Wandsworth, UNA London and SE Region

Followed by Q and A

For more information please contact:

Catherine Pluygers: Vice- Chair UNA Wandsworth catherinepluygers@hotmail.com

Robert Storey: Chair UNA Wandsworth 07776 356334

Meena Storey: Hon Sec UNA Wandsworth storeyrw@aol.com

Westminster UNA

On **10th March, 19:00**, Westminster UNA is hosting the **18th International Law Lecture** at the Brunei Lecture Theatre at SOAS, to be presented by **Sir Howard Morrison**, QC, CBE, KCMG, until recently a judge at the International Criminal Court. There are no plans for hybrid coverage, but the event should be available later on YouTube. To register, follow [this link](#).

On **8th April, 14:00 - 17:30**, Westminster UNA are planning to host **Celebrating Indigenous Languages - Defending Endangered Languages** at the Aga Khan Centre, King's Cross. This event heralds the International Decade for Indigenous languages (2022-2031) and will review progress made since our meeting marking the International Year of Indigenous Languages in 2019. It will be a hybrid meeting. Details to follow. The event is co-hosted with the Foundation for Endangered Languages.

On **26th May**, Westminster will host their **18th Conference and Ceremony to mark the International Day of UN Peacekeepers**. The conference will be online only. The ceremony at the Cenotaph will follow its traditional format. Military units returned from UN duties will participate together with the Band of Grenadier Guards.

Other plans from UNA Westminster include:

- a **Party on the United Nations Green**, on **17th or 18th July (tbc)**
- an online event on **Is there a place for the voice of Faith in international negotiations?**
- **Vienna Study Tour** on **3-7 October**.
- an event on the **International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance**, for which the key speaker will be **Lene Guerke**.

For more information on this branch see [their website](#).

LASER Summer Council

The LASER Summer Council - **Climate Change: Impact, Reports, Solutions** - will be hosted by UNA Harpenden on **9th July, 10:30 - 17:00** at the Salvation Army, Leyton Green, Harpenden AL5 2TG. Entry will be free. Please register [here](#) to join us in meeting together as a region again.