

[View this email in your browser](#)

The Laser Pulse The Newsletter of UNA LASER

2023 Issue No. 5

Table of Contents

From Our Chair

Campaigns

- Overseas Aid
- Environment

Branches

LASER Summer Council

Events

- UNA Streatham and Clapham
- UNA Harpenden
- UNA Luton
- UNA Westminster
- UNA Warwick

LASER Pulse

From Our Chair



Trisha Rogers

The May UN International Day for Biological Diversity, with the theme ***From Agreement to Action: Build Back Biodiversity***, brought a renewed sense of hope after the adoption of [the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity framework](#) (at COP 15). Our Climate and Oceans Officer, **Gonzalo Alvarez**, points out that it has been well documented that outbreaks of Zoonotic diseases transmitted from wildlife to domestic animals (and/or livestock) and then to humans have increased. This is thought to be due to human impacts on natural

ecosystems, resulting in biodiversity loss, expanding these threats as a result (e.g. coronaviruses pandemics). He urges us to keep

doing all we can at local, regional, national and international level to raise awareness of the importance of biological diversity in the world, and let's keep taking action in our local communities to increase biodiversity.

From Understanding to Action is also the theme (and the title) of the latest piece by former UNA-UK Chief Executive, **Natalie Samarasinghe**. It shares ideas being prepared for next year's Summit of the Future, in [A Breakthrough for People and the Planet](#). Natalie's article ends with a useful reminder to us that "today, almost every challenge we all face has a global dimension The UN, both flawed and indispensable, will continue to be relevant."



Campaigns

Stop UK's Overseas Aid Shrinking and Breaking Promises to the World's Neediest People



Our Campaigns Officer, **Valeria Minisini**, [gives details here](#) of the effects of the UK shrinking overseas aid budget, not only through the announced cuts but because the increasing numbers of refugees means that less aid is available to support promised projects for the world's neediest people. There are now reports that the UK government – rather than making the

promised return to the 0.7% Gross National Income agreed by the UN – may be going to shrink the aid budget even further. We urge you to write to [your local MP](#) as well as the [Minister for Overseas Development, Andrew Mitchell](#) and [the FCDO](#), urging them to keep UK promises.

Environment

We are now in the final countdown to the **Great Big Green Week (10-18 June)**, run by the Climate Coalition, of which LASER is a member. *Show up for nature, people and climate with your community. From wildlife gardening, to upcycling workshops and everything in between, there's something for all the family – use [this link](#) to find an event near you.* You might find helpful the [Great Big Green Week resources page](#).



Branches

How Green Is Your Branch?

At our Policy Conference in 2019, we unanimously agreed that we should ask branches to try to reduce their carbon footprints and to have practical policies to mitigate increasing global atmospheric CO2. It was also agreed that branches should report annually on their progress. Our Environment Officer, **Annesha Kar Gupta**, annually collects the information from branches and reports to our AGM. If your branch has not yet responded, please download and complete the form from [this link](#) and share your achievements with [Annesha](#). Her reports in the [AGM Presentations on our website](#) might inspire you for future actions.

LASER Summer Council



UNA Canterbury is hosting our Summer Council on **1st July** on ***The Sea of Hope and Darkness***. Places are limited, so **please register (free) as soon as possible**: [here](#) if you plan to attend in person; [here](#) for online attendance. We look forward to seeing you in Canterbury! As well as focusing on the important topic of the 'boat people', this is a rare opportunity for people from all over the region to meet up to share news and ideas.

Events

UNA Streatham and Clapham

On **17th June, 13:00** at **English Martyrs Church**, 2 Mitcham Lane Streatham SW16 6NN (entry via the path between the Church and the Hall signed 'English Martyrs Parish Office'), UNA Streatham and Clapham is holding a free **Hunger Lunch**, which will consider ***Famine around the world: immediate actions and long-term solutions***. This bread-and-cheese lunch event will also include videos from UNICEF and FAO, followed by discussion. It will be raising money for UNICEF and CAFOD. There is no charge, no need to bring anything, nor any registration; everyone is welcome.

UNA Harpenden



On 24th June, 10:30-12:30, at **Salvation Army, Leyton Green**, Harpenden AL5 2TG, UNA Harpenden is holding a free talk by **Peter Segal**, St Albans Friends of Palestine, on ***The Future of Israel and the Palestinians***. He will consider the implications of the election of Israel's far right government. Please register [here](#).

UNA Luton

Luton UNA is planning the following events. For further information, nearer each date, please contact [the Chair](#).

- On 15th July, 17:00 – 19:00, a virtual event will mark **Srebrenica Remembrance Day**, looking at ***Hate crime: consequences and prevention***.
- On 23rd September, 17:00 – 19:00, a virtual event will consider ***Restoration of a healthy environment: plastic pollution and solutions***
- On 21st October, 17:00 – 19:00, a virtual event will mark United Nations Day, considering ***Is the United Nations relevant to our times?***
- On 16th December, 17:00 – 19:00, a virtual event will mark **International Migrants Day**, considering ***Displaced people and migration***

UNA Westminster

On 12th July, 18:00 in **Room 1, House of Lords** (hosted by Lord Teverson) UNA Westminster is hosting an event on ***Who cares about human rights beyond the horizon?*** The speaker will be **David Hammond**, Chief Executive of Human Rights at Sea, reviewing progress towards international policy change and introducing the new ***Geneva Declaration on Human Rights at Sea***, which extends human rights engagement under existing international law. The event is open to all, but space is limited so [please register here](#).

UNA Warwick

The event planned on **Myanmar**, planned for 23rd June, has been **cancelled**.

LASER Pulse

Please [send us](#) any materials or suggestions for the next edition of *Pulse* by 4th July. For announcement of events, it is helpful if you can download and use [this template](#).



Copyright © 2023 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](#).

