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***The Laser Pulse***  
The Newsletter of UNA LASER

**2023 Issue No. 7**

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**From Our Chair**



**Trisha Rogers**

Welcome back after the summer, during which much has happened globally. As we raise awareness in our communities and campaign on crucial international issues, here are some tips for keeping up-to-date.

To ensure that your Groups/Branches' information is up-to-date on the UNA-UK website, find your Group/Branch [here](#); if the description needs updating, [send](#) a new description of your branch, so the UNA-UK team can update their website. You can submit upcoming events for promotion on their website by clicking [here](#).

We also need to ensure we are up-to-date on our key issues of concern. For example, to keep up with developments leading up to COP28, [sign up](#) for the excellent [GSCC](#) monthly briefings. To hear about major but little reported events around the world, [subscribe to Proximities](#) for a brief daily summary of three non-Western, important but neglected stories.



## AGM



Our AGM will be a hybrid event on Saturday, 28<sup>th</sup> October at Bermondsey Village Hall, Kirby Grove, London SE1 3TD. We hope many of you will join us in person. Directions to the hall from London Bridge mainline station are [here](#). The event will start at 12 noon. If you plan to come in person, please register [here](#) to help us judge numbers for refreshments, though last minute attendees are very welcome too! (Please bring a packed lunch.) If you plan to join us by Zoom, please register [here](#). We shall email out the papers to those

who have registered for the AGM on 23<sup>rd</sup> October. There will not be paper copies available for everyone at the meeting.

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## Executive Committee

As specified in [our constitution](#), at our AGM we shall elect 6 members of our Executive Committee, as well as our Executive Officers (Chair, Secretary and Treasurer). The current committee can be seen [on our website](#). The committee meets about every six weeks, mostly by zoom at 19:30. Nominations for the committee and Officers should be [sent to me](#), please, **by 7<sup>th</sup> October**. Each nomination should include: up to 100 words about the person; their branch/group; the names of the nominator and the seconder. Please ensure that the person is happy to be nominated and would expect to attend most meetings.

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## New President

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We appreciate the support our President, Sir Peter Bottomley, has given us for the last 3 years, and thank him for his term of office. On 28<sup>th</sup> October we are delighted that our new President, HE Dr Fatou Bensouda, High Commissioner of Gambia and former Chief Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court (ICC), will be joining us and will speak on *Reflections of a Former ICC Chief Prosecutor*.

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## Inspirational Branches

Our branches/groups engage in a wide range of innovative and inspirational activities. We shall hear a range of their experiences, from simple to ambitious. Please [let me know](#) if your branch/group would also like to share an activity.

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## Distinguished Service Award

Many people do remarkable – but often not widely noticed – work to promote international understanding through UNA branches. We like to recognise this service through our UNA LASER Distinguished Service Awards. Please [send our Secretary, Jane Beeley](#), by 7<sup>th</sup> October, nominations for this award, with a brief explanation of the service they have given.

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## Resolutions

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 me](#) by 7<sup>th</sup> October.

## Campaigns

### 2023 Updates



This year, UNA London and Southeast Region (UNA LASER) has: campaigned on:

- the political turmoil in Peru
- human rights in the Holy Land
- changes in UK aid harming the world's most disadvantaged people
- climate change and COP28

As we pass the midpoint of 2023, and with the imminent meeting of the UN General Assembly, and then COP28 [we reflect on our campaigns](#), noting developments and new priorities; where change is needed, we must keep up the pressure.

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## COP 28

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Most urgent is to build up the momentum for COP 28, particularly as the government could be [backtracking on environmental issues](#), and about to break its £11.6 billion climate finance promise to vulnerable countries. Keir Starmer, is indicating that the [Labour Party is also hesitating](#) in its support for climate finance. So do:

- join the Climate Coalition in [emailing your MP](#)
- sign [Friends of the Earth's petition](#)
- encourage any schools you know to get [Creative for Climate Justice](#).



## Support For Branches

### Climate Information



UNA Climate and Oceans has launched a [Climate Action Platform](#), with a wealth of information and down to earth climate action advice, at global and local level. The platform includes fully interactive maps and useful links with lots of great information and fantastic advice. This is Phase I; they will be adding more elements to the Platform in the coming weeks. Comparing countries could be particularly useful in the run-up to COP 28.

Note, too, the Energy Dashboard and the section on Food choices.

### UN Special Rapporteurs as Speakers

The UN Human Rights Council has about 50 Special Rapporteurs, as well as fact-finding missions and working groups on different aspects of human rights. Part of their role is to raise awareness of their issue of concern and they are usually excellent communicators – and therefore good speakers for UNA events. Some of those based in the UK are: [Nazli Ghanea](#) from Oxford University on Freedom of Religion or Belief; Javaid Rehman on Iran, and Alexandra Xanthaki on Cultural Rights, both from Brunel University. Sardar Ali of Warwick University is a member of the fact-finding mission on Iran.



United Nations  
special rapporteur

## Events

### UNA Harpenden



On **30th September, 10:30-12:30**, UNA Harpenden are holding a free in-person meeting on ***Agonies of Empire - The Second American Civil War?*** at the Salvation Army, Leyton Green, Harpenden AL5 2TG. The speaker will be **Emeritus Professor Mick Cox**, LSE. Please register [here](#).

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## UNA Luton



On **23<sup>rd</sup> September, 16:00-18:00**, UNA Luton is hosting a webinar on ***Restoring a Healthy Environment: Plastic Pollution & Solutions***. There will be speakers from Bangladesh and from the UK. For further information, please contact: [Dr Nazia Khanum](#) or use [the zoom link](#).

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## UNA Streatham and Clapham



On **24<sup>th</sup> September, 14:30**, UNA Streatham and Clapham will host a webinar on ***COP 28 Correspondents: taking stock of progress since the Glasgow Climate COP***. This will be an opportunity to catch up on recent progress and to discuss what letters will help maintain momentum. [Here](#) is the zoom link.

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## UNA Bexhill and Hastings



On **21st October 2023, 10:45 – 16:30**, UNA Bexhill and Hastings is marking UN Peace Day with an events on ***Climate Change & Refugees*** at St. Peter's Community Centre, Church Street, Bexhill, TN40 2HE. The event will include, in the morning, an interactive exhibition on *Peoples' Progress and Success in Making Peace and in Social, Economic & Environmental Development*. After a BYO lunch, there will be a presentation about UNESCO,

followed by café-style workshops. For more information and to register, please contact [Sheila Kesby](#) or [register online here](#).

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## UNA Climate and Oceans



On **18<sup>th</sup> November, 10:00 – 16:30** at St. Peter's Community Centre, Church Street Bexhill TN40 2HE, UNA Climate and Oceans is co-hosting **The Ocean Symposium and Marine Exhibition 2023**, addressing ocean pollution, ocean acidification, underwater

ecosystem restoration, ocean technology, climate change, sustainability, international and local projects, networking. There will be thought-provoking discussions led by experts. The cost is £6. [Go here](#) for more information and to register.

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## UNA Westminster



**Probably on 30<sup>th</sup> November (TBC)**, UNA Westminster, with the Institute of Commonwealth Studies, University of London, is hosting – at Senate House, University of London, Malet Street, and online – a hybrid conference on **The Continuing Search for Truth: Next Steps for the UN Commission of Inquiry into the death in 1961 of UN Secretary General Dag Hammarskjöld**. The

conference will consider Hammarskjöld's legacy in Africa, as well as reviewing the unique ongoing UN inquiry, and efforts to suppress it. As more information is available, it will be on the [UNA Westminster website](#).

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## UNA Warwick

On **2<sup>nd</sup> September, 10:00-17:00**, UNA Warwick will host a stall at the Warwick District Council **Ecofest** in the Pump Room Gardens, Leamington Spa, CV32 4AA. The stall will focus on COP28, its goals and our involvement.

On **30 September, 12:15-14:00**, Warwick UNA will hold a hybrid meeting at Leamington Spa Baptist Church, Chandos Street, CV32 4RN, on **International Migration – World in Crises**. The speaker will be **Jonas Kaufman**, from Oxford and Essex Universities. Tea/coffee/biscuits will be provided. For further information, please contact [Gian Clare](#). [Here](#) is the zoom link.

On **28 October, 12:15-14:00**, UNA Warwick will host a hybrid meeting at Leamington Spa Baptist Church, Chandos Street, CV32 4RN on **Threats to Biodiversity – Managing our natural resources**, with speaker **Matilda Dunn** from Imperial College. Tea/coffee/biscuits will be provided. For further information, please contact [Gian Clare](#). [Here](#) is the zoom link.

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## UNA Southern Region

On **23<sup>rd</sup> September**, Southern Region UNA will hold their **Coffee morning (10:00), AGM (14:00), Any Questions? (14:45) Speaker (15:30)** at Newbury Town Hall, Newbury RG14 5AA. Cost £5. For further information or to register, please contact [Graeme Panting](#).

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## Next Deadline for Submissions

Please [send us](#) any materials or suggestions for the next edition of *Pulse* by **28<sup>th</sup> September**.

**NB: For announcement of events, it is helpful if you can download and use [this template](#).**



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