

[View this email in your browser](#)



2023 Issue No. 10

Table of Contents

From Our Chair

AGM

Campaigning

Policy Conference

Support For Groups/Branches

Events

- UNA Bexhill and Hastings - LASER Summer Council
- UNA Blackheath and Greenwich
- UNA Harpenden
- UNA Streatham and Clapham
- UNA Wandsworth
- Climate Coalition

Next Deadline for Submissions

From Our Chair



Trisha Rogers

Thank you for your many appreciative comments about our AGM on Saturday. We hope to share [on our website](#) summaries of:

- the highly topical presentation of our new President, Dr Fatou Bensouda about her experience as Chief Prosecutor at the International Criminal Court;
- some groups' descriptions of inspirational aspects of their work (starting this month with Harpenden's analysis of finding good speakers: see below).

Please [let me know](#) if your branch/group would like to share some aspect of your activities at next year's AGM.

We warmly thanked **Gonzalo Alvarez** who is standing down from our Executive Committee and welcomed [Hana Shono](#) to the committee. Many thanks, too, to all those who helped with the technology, refreshments, furniture-moving, washing up and other tasks: it was a real team effort.



Neville Grant received the Distinguished Service Award in recognition of his many contributions through UNA-UK, UNA LASER and through UNA Blackheath and Greenwich.

Sarah Webster, Chair of UNA Streatham and Clapham, received the Stevens Trophy for their wide range of work (related to peace, climate change, indigenous people, hunger and tax, as well as working with Streatham on being a UNICEF recognised child-friendly community).



Our new President, **HE Dr Fatou Bensouda**, met with members, including Executive Committee member, Titilayo Odukale, chair of the new UNA Medway, Jessica Giles, and Vice Chair of UNA Eastbourne, Mozmil Hussain.

LASER has joined 2 coalitions to work with others on some of our key goals.

- [Stop the Inhumanity at Europe's Borders](#) aims to reform current border regimes and practices, and to stop the appalling inhumanities being experienced by people on the move;
- [LAW not War](#) is a public education and advocacy campaign to promote and enhance the role of the International Court of

Justice to resolve international conflicts, prevent war and strengthen the rule of law in international relations.

Our main occasion for agreeing policy resolutions is at our annual Policy Conference (next on 9th March 2024: see below), but at the AGM we consider urgent resolutions, this year on COP28 and on Israel/Palestine. There was not time for a thorough debate (and next year we shall ensure more time for this), so, after an interesting discussion, [these urgent resolutions](#) were accepted unanimously and unchanged. We have forwarded them to the Foreign Secretary, accompanied by a letter including additional points from the debate. The meeting also unanimously asked me:

- to forward to UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres our support for his work in addressing the war in Gaza, including his [24th October remarks to the Security Council](#). We all shared his unequivocal condemnation of: the horrifying and unprecedented 7 October acts of terror by Hamas in Israel; his call for the unconditional release of hostages; his reminder of the suffering of the Palestinian people; and his statement that, while this cannot justify the appalling attacks by Hamas, nor can those appalling attacks justify the collective punishment of the Palestinian people;
- to give our support to UNA-UK for their [helpful and thorough statement](#) on the situation in Gaza and Israel. In light of the Palestinian expulsions in both Gaza and the West Bank – and fears of possible ethnic cleansing – we have suggested adding a clause to their statement on the importance of displaced people having the right to return to their homes.

Campaigning



We urge members to use the AGM resolutions as a basis for lobbying their MPs at this crucial time in Israel/Palestine and in the build-up to COP28. Please notice particularly Substantive Clause 8 of our [Israel/Palestine resolution](#), emphasising the importance of peaceful ways of expressing criticism,

including boycotts, divestment and sanctions, much of which would be prohibited for publicly funded bodies by the [Economic Activity of Public Bodies \(Overseas Matters\) Bill](#), currently going through parliament; so it is urgent to campaign against this Bill.

As debate continues over how best to act to end the horrifying suffering being caused by both Hamas and Israel, we remind people that is not anti-Semitic to criticise behaviour of the Israeli government or sections of the Israeli or Palestinian populations (such as some illegal settlers or parts of Hamas), and to use the widely respected [Jerusalem Declaration on Antisemitism](#).



On COP28, we suggest you use either [our resolution](#) as a basis for writing to your MP or the [Climate Coalition's process for emailing your MP](#).

Policy Conference



Our 2024 Policy Conference will be held at [Bermondsey Village Hall](#), London SE1 3TD – and online – on **9th March, starting at 12 noon**. If you want to join by zoom, please register [here](#). Registrations for attending at the hall are [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 fewer** 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 announcing in the December *Pulse* which of our current resolutions will be retired at this Policy Conference as being no longer current.

Please send in draft policy resolutions to our [Policy Committee Chair](#) by **5pm on Monday 29th January**. We shall then share the draft agenda with you in the February *Pulse* for which you will be able to send in amendments by **26th February**.

Support For Groups/Branches



Several of the presentations by groups/branches at our AGM will be useful to branches. Today, we are sharing the first of these, from UNA Harpenden on [Finding and Engaging Good Speakers](#). As you will have seen in *Pulse*, UNA Harpenden runs a wide-ranging speaker programme, with authoritative and eloquent speakers. [Here](#), their Chair, Suheil Shahryar, explains his process for finding and engaging these speakers.

Events

UNA Bexhill and Hastings - LASER Summer Council



On **22nd June, 2024**, UNA Bexhill and Hastings will host the **LASER Summer Council** in **Bexhill**. The theme will be **Peace and Human Security: Ploughshares into Swords?** Further information will be in future editions of *Pulse*.

UNA Blackheath and Greenwich



On **13th November, 18:30**, in **Room 080, the University of Greenwich Queen Anne Building**, Park Row, London SE10 9LS, UNA Blackheath and Greenwich, with the University of Greenwich, is hosting a free event to consider **Youth Participation in Climate**

Policy: digital activism and climate change to consider the inspiring journey of today's youth leading the charge in climate policy. The speaker will be **Oluwatobi (Toby) Aigbogun**, UNA-UK Trustee, Senior Strategic Partnerships Manager at World Vision, and the Founder of SocialGood UK, a United Nations Foundation-backed community using new media and technology to address and achieve the 17 Sustainable Development Goals by working with the government, football clubs and boroughs on programmes and policies. For more information and to register, please go [here](#).

UNA Harpenden



On **25th November, 10:30**, UNA Harpenden is holding a talk on **Russia: Sharing the Cage with an Angry Bear**, at **The Salvation Army, AL5 2TG**, by **Sir Tony Brenton**, former British Ambassador to Russia. This talk looks at the historic evolution which has made Russia what it is, its deepening confrontation with the West, the impact of the war itself, and where all this may be taking us. Please register [here](#). Following the meeting, if you would like to join the speaker and others for lunch at Pasta Cibo in Harpenden, please register for Lunch Reservation and wait for confirmation of booking.



Harpden UNA
Quiz Night
Saturday, December 9
at 6 pm
at the Park Hall

On **Saturday 9th December, 18:00**, UNA Harpenden are holding their **Quiz Night** at the **Park Hall, AL5 2LX**. A Fish and Chips Supper, with a vegetarian option, from Godfreys will be served at 19:30. The prices and choices from Godfreys can be found [here](#). Please register [here](#) by **25th November**. You will be contacted nearer the time for payment.

UNA Streatham and Clapham



On **21st November, 18.30-20.00**, UNA Streatham and Clapham, part of South London UNA, are hosting a webinar on **Using taxation to advance sustainable development globally**, a conversation exploring tax justice and global development. Speakers will include: **Sergio Chaparro-Hernandez**, International Policy and

Advocacy Lead at Tax Justice Network; **William Davis**, international development economist and member of the Streatham and Clapham UNA Executive Committee; **Peter Henriksen Ringstad**, Senior Advisor, Norad - Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation. Please register [here](#); you will then be sent the link.

UNA Wandsworth



On 1st December, 19:30-21:15, UNA Wandsworth (part of South London UNA), with the Rahela Trust, at the **Community Church** Werter Rd, London SW15 2LL, will be hosting an event on **Education and Mentoring for Women in Afghanistan**. There will be an update on the situation followed by conversation and Afghan food. To book a place, please email the [Chair of Wandsworth UNA](#)

Climate Coalition



On 23rd November, 14:00, the Climate Coalition (of which LASER is a member) is holding its **Annual Movement Gathering** at the [Save The Children](#) office in Farringdon, London (or on zoom) to consider the question, **What would we do in this time, if we truly believed in ourselves and those around us?**. **Jon Alexander**, author of *Citizens: Why the Key to Fixing Everything is All of Us* will lead discussion of trends impacting climate change campaigning in the next 12 months. This will be followed by drinks and networking from 16:00. Please register [here](#).

Next Deadline for Submissions

Please [send us](#) any materials or suggestions for the next edition of *Pulse* by 5th December.

NB: 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](#).

