

PLANET 3 DIGEST . . . JUNE 2013

Incorporating UNAA (SA) Newsletter No. 26

Child Protection and the Rights of the Child



The organisation, Grandparents for Grandchildren, is one of five organisations represented on the UNAA SA executive committee. John Langton, CEO of Grandparents for Grandchildren, representing the organisation, agreed to speak to UNAA members to explain the need for such a group.

John and his wife, Denise, found themselves looking after their grandson who had been diagnosed with Asbergers syndrome. It all started with a small committee working in Parliament House out of Nick Zenophon's office and with help from Jay Wetherall they were able to move into the Torrens Building, which has now become a university prescient. This precipitated the move to Wright Street in the same way UNAA SA has moved from the Torrens Building to Carrington Street.

From the small group at the beginning GFG has grown to a group with over 500 clients. There two or three new clients each week. We receive about 4 or 5 clients from Families SA each month.

John explained how their relationship with Families has developed and their involvement with the Family Court (federal) and the Youth Court (state). Social workers appear to have a lot of power and tend to "talk down" to grandparents. They are able to use hearsay evidence in the Youth Court, seemingly without question. They are able to use "confidential evidence"! Grandparents For Grandchildren is able to find pro bono lawyers as Families SA use the public prosecutor. Family lawyers can be difficult to find, complicated by the fact there are the two courts already mentioned. The judge in the Youth Court only makes suggestions; Families SA does not necessarily follow them.

Grandparents for Grandchildren has a good working relationship with the Women and Children's Hospital, Medicare, Centrelink and the South Australian Police. Much of our work is done under the Child Protection Act. Initially, there was no mention of grandparents in the act but we have acted to change that. Now relative and kinship care have been acknowledged. Half the children in care today are with their grandparents. It costs the government over \$100 000 annually to keep a child in foster care. Children are our future; neglect is a very sad situation.

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UNAA 2013 National Conference registrations now open

The United Nations Association of Australia (UNAA) invites you to be part of its 2013 National Conference in Canberra. Some of the key speakers include Professor the Hon Gareth Evans – Chancellor of ANU and former Foreign Minister of Australia & Maj Gen Mike Smith – Head of the UN Support Mission in Libya's Security Sector Advisory Section

WHERE: University House, the Australian National University, Canberra

WHEN: Pre-conference workshops - Thursday 8 August (afternoon)

Main Conference - Friday 9 and Saturday 10 August

UNAA Federal Council Meeting (Members only) - Sunday 11 August

Please purchase your tickets to the UNAA National Conference at <http://unaaconference.eventbrite.com.au/#>

UNAA Status of Women Film Night

Film Night Double Feature

Sunday, 28th July, 2013

Wallis Theatre, 139 Richmond Road, Richmond

4.00 pm First Film begins, Interval meal with drinks, 8.30 coffee & cake

Admission \$25 (includes meal, drinks & supper)

Further details – Heather 8271 4433

Discussion Evening

Petra Ball, International Humanitarian Law Officer for Red Cross South Australia.

Tuesday 6 August 2013 at 7.30 pm.

UNAA(SA) Office
57/81 Carrington Street
ADELAIDE

As UNAA we have some understanding of the UDHR and other UN protocols concerning human rights, but realising we understand very little about the Geneva Convention, its history, and how the Red Cross operates in this field of human rights, we have asked Petra to come and speak with us..

United Nations Association of Australia (South Australia) Annual General Meeting

St Cyprians Church Hall
70 – 72 Melbourne Street
North Adelaide
Sunday 21st July, 2013
3.30 pm

Guest Speaker Matt Treager President UN Youth

South Australia's UN Youth is one of the most active UN Youth groups in Australia. They have an exciting program involving students from secondary schools across the state. This involves forums and mock general assemblies and similar activities. Students from public and private schools are involved as well as those from rural and remote areas with assistance from the Norman Percy Cole Bequest.

Shared supper available.

Information: John 8344 4978 or Ron 8264 3763

United Nations puts French Polynesia back on the UN Decolonisation List

The United Nations General Assembly has put French Polynesia back on the UN list of territories to be decolonized at a meeting boycotted by France. The resolution passed by consensus, was sponsored by the Solomon Islands, Nauru, and Tuvalu last February but has only just been tabled. It calls on France to intensify its dialogue with French Polynesia to include a fair self-determination process. The campaign has been driven for decades by pro-independence politician , Oscar Temaru, who had flown to New York to attend the vote.

France withdrew its Pacific territories from the UN list in 1947 and resisted the re-inscription bid by the French Polynesian government whose term of office has just ended. The newly elected majority in the French Polynesian assembly has just held its first sitting and controversially change the agenda to hold a vote to put an immediate end to the decolonization process.

France has predictably condemned the UN move, describing it as a glaring interference in its affairs and a total lack of respect for the choice made by Polynesian voters.



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Quinoa –the new super food

Hailed as the new superfood and embraced by trend chasing restaurants as a must-use ingredient, quinoa is in the international spotlight – so much so that 2013 has been declared International Year of Quinoa by the United Nations Food and Agricultural Organisation. There is more than just a publicity stunt behind this: quinoa is primarily grown in South America, and its global promotion is seen as a way of taking the grain from a quirky alternative to become a mainstream component of Western diets, and subsequently help to stimulate poor rural economies in Ecuador, Peru, Paraguay, Argentina and Bolivia.

The UN declared 2013 the year of quinoa (pronounced by Ecuadorians as: keen-wah) to shine a light on the grain's biodiversity and nutritional value. It comprises 20% protein and a very large array of beneficial amino acids – and is also free of gluten, which is why it has become such a favourite in contemporary diets. Ironically what is being viewed by Westerners as a new ingredient has been cultivated and eaten (primarily in soups and salads) by indigenous Andean tribes for about 4000 years.

Quinoa's appeal is even starting to gain traction at the local production level, as Justin McCarthy of De-Mac Australia is considering planting the first trial crops in Australia at Port Wakefield. Justin, whose suite of South Australian based companies are key fresh food providers for the large supermarket chains, believes that quinoa has a potential to quickly leap from a niche health store product into a popular supermarket item.

UN Youth Conference

Anglicare sponsored Aboriginal student Caitlin Stone from Victor Harbour High School to attend the UN Youth Conference in Adelaide where she learnt about international affairs at the youth leadership camp.

"We each had a different country – I had Saudi Arabia – and we had to work out what our country was involved in, what would be better for our country and basic leadership." Caitlin says.

Her days as a model diplomat are part of Caitlin's journey as a leader – she wants to work as an Aboriginal Education teacher.

"I love kids and I'm really passionate about my own culture – I was born in Western Australia and my family are from over there. There is so much to learn about Aboriginal culture."

From The Supporter Anglicare SA Winter 2013 Vol 21 no 2

Justin will be using the United Nations spotlight on quinoa this year to help obtain fast research data on optimal growing and harvesting regimes. Justin is already heartened that Australia's first quinoa crops have flourished in north-western Tasmania under Henneette Damen of Kindred Organics, and sees great possibilities owing to its high tolerance and requiring far less water than other grain crops. He is hopeful that quinoa could be part of a crop rotation solution, making it a useful commercial crop across the wheat belt of Australia .

Quinoa certainly carries strong commercial appeal. Because it is presently only grown in South American countries, it is expensive – costing up to \$12 for 250 grams of imported organic quinoa. Prepared quinoa with added flavourings from local distributor Ja Jacqui Good of Thistle BE Good sell at \$9.80 for 225 grams.

"I think there is fantastic potential for growing quinoa in South Australia, which is why we are now looking at serious science partners to undertake more detailed research for possible broadacre farming," says Justin.

In Adelaide, the year of quinoa will be celebrated on June 28 with a ceremony at Government House, with fine arts students from the University of South Australia presenting paintings of quinoa that will be featured on commemorative stamps. Kilkenny Primary School – which is part of the Stephanie Alexander Garden Program – will feature quinoa as part of its education program.

UN Report on the Occupied Palestinian Territory

Now that Australia is a member of the UN Security Council, Australian newspapers and the media in general, should devote much more attention to UN affairs. However, recently one significant UN report failed to attract very much media recognition at all.

This was the report of the UN's International Fact Finding Mission on Israeli Settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territory. Released on 31st January this year, the report listed many breaches of international law and human rights violations. The Financial Review devoted 30 words to this report on page 13 and The Australian mentioned only the Israeli government's attack on the report.

The mission was the result of a decision at the 19th session of the human rights council on 22nd March, 2012, to "dispatch an international fact-finding mission ... to investigate the implications of Israeli settlements on the civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights of the Palestinian people throughout the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem. The Mission's members included Christine Chanet (chair) from France, Asma Jahangir of Pakistan and Unity Dow of Botswana. The Mission was denied entry into Israel or the Palestinian Territory. Instead the Mission met in Jordan with more than 50 people affected by the settlements or working with relevant non-government organisations.

The Mission acted according to General Assembly Resolution 67 / 19, which reaffirmed "the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination and to independence in their State of Palestine on the Palestinian Territory occupied since 1967." Despite all the United Nations resolutions declaring the existence of the settlements as illegal and calling for their cessation, the planning and growth of the settlements continues both of existing and of new structures."

The Mission revealed that Israeli politicians, academics and community activists who criticise the settlements program are discredited in public discourse. This includes the targeting of veteran combatants who have served in the Israeli military in the Occupied Palestinian Territory and who voice their dissent.

Recommendations

The mission put forward the following among many recommendations:

- In compliance with article 49 of the Fourth Geneva Convention, Israel must cease all settlement activities without preconditions. In addition Israel must initiate a process of withdrawal of all settlers from the Occupied Palestinian Territory.
- The Mission urges Israel to put an end to arbitrary arrest and detention of Palestinian people, especially children, and observe the prohibition of the transfer of prisoners from the Occupied Palestinian Territory to the territory of Israel, according to article 76 of the Fourth Geneva Convention.
- The Mission calls upon all member states to take appropriate measures to ensure that business enterprises domiciled in their territory and/or under their jurisdiction ... that conduct activities in or related to the settlements respect human rights throughout their operations ...



The full text of the Mission's report is on the United Nations Human Rights Commission website. See also: New Internationalist October 2012. Source of maps: Wikipedia.

Mother Earth Day – What can it mean!

After the United Nations adopted 22nd April as Mother Earth Day, Bolivia adopted its Mother Earth Law in 2010. The law requires all current and future legislation to accept the “ecological limits set by nature”. In practice, it means pushing a transition from fossil fuels to renewable energy, and environmentally auditing companies. Elsewhere, Nicaragua committed to a near-total phasing out of fossil fuels by 2017, while Cuba’s organic, urban farming movement has greened cities and boosted public health.

In Ecuador there is an overarching National Plan for Good Living that rejects “most orthodox approaches to development”. It embodies what is called five resolutions: constitutional and democratic; ethical; economic and agrarian; social; and “in defence of Latin American dignity”. The aim is to reassert a country’s sovereign authority to put its own social and economic objectives above that of the markets.

As nations like Britain and Australia agonise about the affordability of services such as health and education, Denmark’s tax system pays for free health and education, home help for the elderly and about three-quarters of the cost of childcare. Far from harming the economy, higher taxes stimulate investment in infrastructure, education and research and development.

To suggest that countries like Britain and Australia have no economic alternatives to their current chosen paths is a self-serving political deception. What are some of these possible alternatives?

In Uruguay the president refuses to live in the state mansion and he gives away 90% of his pay, living on the national average wage to share the struggles of his people. President Jose Mujica lives on about \$700 per month. His presidential guard is just two policemen. He drives 1978 VW Beetle and criticises the rich countries’ development model, berating other world leaders’ “blind obsession to achieve growth with consumption”.

In Iceland after the financial meltdown, the “pots and pans” revolution led to a new citizen-drafted constitution soon to be adopted. Rather than making the public pay for the crisis, as Nobel winning economist Paul Krugman points out, Iceland also “let banks go bust” and, instead of placating the financial markets “imposed temporary controls on the movement of capital to give itself room to manoeuvre”. In Porto Alegre in Brazil, since 1990, citizens meet every week to decide how a big portion of the city’s public purse will be spent. It is called participatory budgeting and in seven years led to proper sanitation in poor neighbourhoods. One reason why Germany was less badly hit by the bank crisis is because 70% of the sector is in small and community banks. By comparison, in the United Kingdom the big five banks hold 80% of the mortgages and 90% of small and medium enterprise accounts. The German banks have a dual mandate, having to be useful as well as profitable. They are also mostly mutually owned, avoid risky speculation, possess local knowledge and retain branch autonomy and decision making.

In Spain, the 14 billion euro Mondragon co-operative, with more than 80 000 employees, demonstrates that less self-interested company models can succeed at scale. The Netherlands successful uptake of a shorter working week has offered a way of creating a better work/family life balance.

Bhutan famously measures its success not by using GDP, simply a measure of the amount, not quality, of economic activity – but by assessing Gross National Happiness. This broad composite indicator uses 151 variables including: good governance, education, health, ecological resilience, community vitality, wellbeing, time use, living standards and cultural diversity.

Perhaps we can save the planet if we could have most these possibilities – real possibilities – happening worldwide.

Based on an article by economics writer Andrew Simms in the Observer 17th February 2013. Andrew Simms is a fellow of the New Economics Foundation in the United Kingdom as well as the author of a book entitled *Cancel the Apocalypse: the New Path to Prosperity*.

Invitation

*Australian West Papua Association SA Inc.
Australian-East Timor Friendship Association, SA Inc.
United Nations Association of Australia SA Division Inc.
Australian Institute of International Affairs, SA Branch
Women's International League of Peace and Freedom
present*

Public Forum

West Papua:

"Can peace movements be effective against state violence?"

The struggle to build accountability and the rule of law in West Papua

Guest Speakers:

Dr. Budi Hernawan

*Franciscan Friar from West Papua
Postdoctoral Fellow at ANU*

Yan Christian Warinussy

*Human rights lawyer from West Papua
Winner of the John Humphrey Freedom Award in 2005*

to be introduced by

Dr. Jim Elmslie

*Founding Co-Convener of The West Papua Project
Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies, University of Sydney*

**6.00 pm for 6.30 pm start
Tuesday 9th July, 2013**

*The Bradley Forum
Level 5, Hawke Building
University of South Australia, City West Campus
50-55 North Terrace,
Adelaide*

Enquiries: Andrew Derrington mob: 0408578831 email: derrington@adam.com.au



AWPA



AETFA



We acknowledge the support of the Hawke Centre in making the Bradley Forum available for our event!

POSTSCRIPT

Discussion Evening: Grandparents for Grandchildren

Our second bi-monthly discussion evening was held on Tuesday 4 June. At short notice our committee member John Langton, CEO of Grandparents for Grandchildren (GFG) stepped in to tell us about how GFG provide help and assistance for children whose family situation has placed them in an impossible situation. Very often grandparents are not recognised as being able to accept custody of a child where parental support has broken down. I wish to thank John for highlighting this most important insight on the Rights of the Child. The speaker previously announced, Petra Ball from Red Cross was called away interstate, and John was happy to take her place.

Our Newsletter

We owe a great thank you to Peter Faulkner who has resigned as our Newsletter editor. After many years of excellent service he has made it an interesting and thought provoking regular publication. We wish him a quick and complete recovery from his recent illness, thank him for his great work as editor, and take some comfort from the thought that he is already busy providing our new editor with material for this and future editions. Thank you Peter.

Ron Hall, our Secretary, has agreed to take over the task of editor, and this is his first edition. He is in the process of recruiting helpers (sub editors), and with their help we look forward to it being an ongoing interesting publication.

Discussion with Red Cross on International Human Rights.

As UNAA we have some understanding of the UDHR and other UN protocols concerning HR. But realising we understand very little about the Geneva Convention, its history, and how the Red Cross operates this area, we have asked Petra Ball, International Humanitarian Law Officer for Red Cross South Australia to come and speak to us on Tuesday 6 August at 7.30 pm in our UNAA(SA) office at 57/81 Carrington Street.

The UN Year of Quinoa

As 2013 progresses we are finding ourselves very much involved in this very different, and very interesting UN Year. We have been asked to launch the UN Year of Quinoa, and the SA Governor, Rear Admiral Kevin Scarce, has agreed to hold a reception for invited guests at Government House on 28 June. As numbers were strictly limited, I must apologise to those who missed out on receiving an invite, I fear we faced a hard task in keeping the list to the permitted number.

Lidia Moretti, UNAA(SA) Vice President, has been indefatigable in the planning for this year, and following her special interest in fine food, has enlisted her many friends in the food industry to give their support in various ways. For example with publicity for recipes, and enlisting well known chefs to offer examples of how Quinoa might be used at our UN Day Dinner.

In addition to the Dinner initiatives planned for the rest of the year will include a Humanitarian Day luncheon for disadvantaged people, school projects, and radio interviews..

Quinoa is already grown in Australia in Tasmania, and there is a possibility that we can take advantage of its drought tolerance, and low water needs, by growing it here in South Australia as well. We look forward to hearing more about this possible development.

UN Day Dinner

Our Annual dinner will be held at the National Wine Centre on Sunday October 20th with Alexander Downer as the guest speaker. The focus of the menu will be Quinoa, and we have four chefs setting out to demonstrate their skills in presenting their version of "Cooking with Quinoa". Make a note in your diary.

AGM

See the notice for our AGM elsewhere in this newsletter. It will be on the afternoon of 21 July at 3.30 pm in Saint Cyprian's Hall, 70-72 Melbourne Street, Lower North Adelaide.

John Crawford, President.