



SUMMARY OF OUTCOMES

40TH PLENARY ASSEMBLY
OF THE WORLD FEDERATION OF UNITED NATIONS ASSOCIATIONS
6-10 NOVEMBER 2012, RIO DE JANEIRO, BRAZIL

WFUNA
1 United Nations Plaza
Room 1177
New York NY 10017
USA

FMANU
Palais des Nations
Room E4-2A
1211 Geneva 10
Switzerland



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World Federation of United Nations Associations

OVERVIEW

Hosted by UNA-Brazil, the 40th Plenary Assembly of WFUNA was held at IBMEC University in Rio de Janeiro from 6-10 November 2012 on the theme “Accelerating Progress: 2015 and Beyond”.

Participants from 41 UNAs, representing every region of the world, attended.

On 6 November a seminar was held on the theme of “From MDGs to SDGs” featuring high-level speakers at the opening ceremony, including Corrado Clini, Italian Minister for the Environment, Land and Sea as well as a video message from Amina Mohammed, Special Adviser on Post-2015 Development Planning. Panelists from the United Nations, civil society, the corporate sector, academia and local government shared their expertise on both the process and the substance of the post-2015 global development agenda.

On 7 November, for the first time at a WFUNA Plenary Assembly, capacity-building workshops were held on various topics, ranging from organizational matters to fundraising and online communications. Parallel to the workshops were information exchange sessions where UNAs shared their activities with each other. A special session focused entirely on bilateral and multilateral UNA collaborations. In the afternoon, regional UNA meetings and the Heads of Delegation meeting were held.

The working sessions of the Plenary Assembly were held during the 3 days from 8-10 November. WFUNA’s President, Ambassador Park Soo Gil chaired the proceedings and video messages were screened from UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and the High Commissioner for Human Rights, Navi Pillay.

Seven UNAs were welcomed as new members of WFUNA and 13 inactive UNAs were disaffiliated.

New leadership was elected.

WFUNA’s Constitution was amended.

The WFUNA Rio Declaration was unanimously adopted (see Annex I).

Resolutions were adopted on issues ranging from financing UNESCO; to supporting the advancement of Universal Human Rights; to youth, peace and security; and on the situation in Syria (see Annex II).

The WFUNA Global Youth Forum was held parallel to the Plenary Assembly.

For the first time, there was real-time social media coverage of the Plenary Assembly activities throughout the 5-day event, including regular Twitter and Facebook updates.

Official sponsors of the event included IBMEC University, TAM Airlines and Forum of the Americas.

Day-to-day summaries, photo albums and a library of all relevant documents -including Capacity Building Session presentations, handouts and the five-point action plan for each session; and the revised Constitution and By-Laws- are available at www.wfuna.org/40th-plenary-assembly

POLICY

The Plenary Assembly established a Commission on resolutions on matters in the field of international relations (Commission 1).

The Plenary issued the “WFUNA Rio Declaration” which is available on the Plenary page of the WFUNA website (link above) and attached in Annex I.

The Plenary issued the following resolutions: Financing UNESCO; Towards greater empowerment of people; Promoting a world free from nuclear weapons; Upholding the commitment to prevent mass atrocity crimes; Supporting the advancement of Universal Human Rights; Securing an effective Arms Trade Treaty; Youth, Peace and Security; and the Situation in Syria (available on the website and attached in Annex II).

A panel of speakers from within the UNA network presented on the thematic issues of sustainable development, peace and security and human rights.

PROGRAMS AND FINANCES

The Secretary-General presented his report of activities, available on the WFUNA website as “Global Citizens for the United Nations, WFUNA Annual Report, Special Plenary Edition: 2010-2012” (www.wfuna.org/our-work#annualreport2012).

The Plenary Assembly established a Commission on internal matters (Commission 2).

The Treasurer’s Report was adopted by consensus. The projected three-year budget for 2013-2015 and the Audited Accounts for 2009-2011 were approved, as well as the membership dues schedule, which continues unchanged.

MEMBERSHIP

The Plenary Assembly admitted the following UNAs as members of WFUNA: Gabon, Indonesia, Montenegro, Namibia, Sao Tome and Principe, United States of America and Zimbabwe

The Plenary Assembly disaffiliated the following UNAs from WFUNA: Albania, Belarus, Bhutan, Bolivia, Burundi, Ecuador, Ethiopia, Haiti, Kenya, Kyrgyz Republic, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, and Zambia.

The UNA Activity Report compiled for the Plenary Assembly is available at www.wfuna.org/una-recent-activities

CONSTITUTIONAL MATTERS

WFUNA’s Constitution and By-Laws were amended by consensus to remove references to the entity “WFUNA-youth” and include provisions for a UNA Code of Conduct.

LEADERSHIP

The Plenary Assembly appointed a 5-member Elections Committee to oversee the voting and elections processes.

Ambassador Park Soo Gil was re-elected as **President**.

Bonian Golmohammadi was re-elected as **Secretary-General** for a term of three years.

Sundeeep Bhutoria was re-elected as **Treasurer**.

Three new **Vice Presidents** were elected. The full list of current Vice Presidents is:

- Chang-Beom Cho, UNA-Republic of Korea (newly elected)
- Rashad Daureeawoo, UNA-Mauritius
- Ervin Gombos, UNA-Hungary
- Janet Edna Nyame-Philipps, UNA-Ghana (newly elected)
- Rena Shashua Hasson, UNA-Israel
- Axel Wuestenhagen, UNA-Austria (newly elected)

Ten new members were elected on to the **Executive Committee**, which is now composed of the following members:

- Ramaz Aptsiauri, UNA-Georgia (second term)
- Alexei Borisov, UNA-Russia (reelected) – Vice-Chair
- Carlos Amat Fores, UNA-Cuba (second term)
- Alexander Gabelic, UNA-Sweden (second term)
- Jay Jethwa, UNA-Australia (second term) – Vice-Chair
- Ali Kiyaei, UNA-South Africa (newly elected)
- Helena Laukko, UNA-Finland (second term)
- Kwang Boon Lee, UNA-Singapore (second term)
- Patrick Madden, UNA-USA (newly elected)
- Phil Mulligan, UNA-UK (newly elected)
- Armine Podosyan, UNA-Armenia (newly elected)
- Norma Rojas, UNA-Venezuela (reelected)
- Eduard Sagarra Trias, UNA-Spain (second term)
- Kari Solholm, UNA-Norway (reelected)
- Christos Theodoulou, UNA-Cyprus (second term)
- Cissa Wa Numbe, UNA-Democratic Republic of Congo (reelected)
- Kate White, UNA-Canada (reelected) - Chair
- Zhang Xiao'an, UNA-China (newly elected)

WFUNA GLOBAL YOUTH FORUM

The WFUNA Global Youth Forum was held from 7-11 November 2012 in conjunction with WFUNA's 40th Plenary Assembly. Twenty-two youth delegates from 14 different UNAs participated.

The youth program included workshops on project management, media strategy, and communication strategy; a community-service trip to a favela (slum) working with local NGOs and recording the experiences on video; discussing programs and collaboration; exchanging ideas; and electing a five-member Youth Advisory Group with a representative from each region (and their five alternates).

The youth attended activities on the seminar and capacity-building days and presented their outcomes to the Plenary during a joint-session on the last day.

Youth Advisory Group and Regional Alternate members:

Youth Advisory Group

- South America: Gabriel Borda, UNA- Brazil
- North America: Edgardo Martinez, UNA- Mexico
- Asia: Vinayak Srivastava, UNA-India
- Africa: Rosemary Jackson, UNA-South Africa
- Europe: Ulrika Ronmark, UNA- Sweden

Regional Alternates

- South America: Pablo Angulo, UNA- Venezuela
- North America: Todd Blyth, UNA- Canada
- Asia: Aaron J Yoo, UNA-Republic of Korea
- Africa: Esube Furaha, UNA-DRC
- Europe: Ida Christoffersen, UNA-Norway

WFUNA RIO DECLARATION

ADOPTED AT THE WFUNA 40TH PLENARY ASSEMBLY
10 NOVEMBER 2012, RIO DE JANEIRO, BRAZIL

The World Federation of United Nations Associations (WFUNA) and its member associations represented at the 40th WFUNA Plenary Assembly in November 2012 in Rio De Janeiro, Brazil, adopt this Declaration and commend it to the Member States of the United Nations and to the peoples of the world.

During this time of rapid global transformation marked by increasing inequality, shifting centers of economic dynamism, and enhanced connectivity through technological advancements and new pressures on the environment, we recognize challenges to multilateralism and threats to the legitimacy of the role of the United Nations at the center of global affairs. To address divisive competition and emphasize the importance of engaging individuals and organizations with the United Nations we will continue conducting creative public outreach that builds support and legitimacy for the organization worldwide.

We emphasize the indispensable role of the United Nations as the facilitator of multilateral action and integrated solutions across interconnected issue areas, such as sustainable development, peace and security, and human rights, and support the measures outlined in the UN Secretary-General's Five-Year Action Agenda.

We believe that civil society plays a vital role in meeting global challenges and will work to increase its role and presence in the United Nations system. Partnerships and functional collaborations across sectors are necessary to address today's complex global challenges, and we aspire to increased openness, connectivity and complementarity with partners from the public and private spheres.

We will remain engaged in the ongoing process to reform the UN to enable it to respond rapidly and effectively to the full range of global challenges and opportunities, including the promotion of the 'One UN' effort to 'deliver as one'.

We continue to look towards a more fair, safe and sustainable future in which the rule of law will prevail. We will seek to empower the next generation of global leaders who will carry on our work. Awareness raising and education about the UN and its efforts remains a top priority.

WFUNA together with all its United Nations Associations will continue with the strategic plan that we have set out while striving to accelerate our impact, continuing to build new relationships, and strengthening our institutional core.



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RESOLUTIONS ISSUED BY THE 40TH PLENARY ASSEMBLY OF THE WORLD FEDERATION OF UNITED NATIONS ASSOCIATIONS

ADOPTED AT THE 40TH WFUNA PLENARY ASSEMBLY
10 NOVEMBER 2012, RIO DE JANEIRO, BRAZIL

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4. Upholding the commitment to prevent mass atrocity crimes
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6. Securing an effective Arms Trade Treaty
7. Youth, peace and security
8. Situation in Syria



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1. FINANCING UNESCO

The 40th Plenary Assembly of the World Federation of United Nations Associations,

1. **Reaffirming** that UNESCO must continue to contribute to the building of peace, the eradication of poverty, to sustainable development and intercultural dialogue through education, the sciences, culture, communication and information;
2. **Deeply shocked** by the present financial crisis of UNESCO, which led to a reduction of the present bi-annual budget from US\$ 653 to US\$ 465 million;
3. **Realizing** that this reduction of almost 30 per cent led to an alarming decline of activities, e.g. in the case of education activities by 57 per cent, in the case of culture activities by 76 per cent and in the case of communication activities by 65 per cent;
4. **Concerned** about the worsening cash flow situation of the Organization;
5. **Appreciating** the attempt of the Director-General to bridge the existing financial gap by adopting immediate cost-saving measures and setting up a Special Emergency Fund;
6. **Recalls** that the prompt and full payment of annual contributions to the regular budget is an obligation incumbent on Member States under the Constitution and the Financial Regulations of the Organization;
7. **Asks** all Member States of UNESCO to fulfill their obligations accordingly;
8. **Also asks** the Member States to set up, if necessary, a medium-term loan fund in order to bridge the increasing financial gap;
9. **Calls** upon all UNAs and National Commissions for UNESCO to cooperate more closely in every way they can do in order to urge their national governments to overcome the present financial crisis of UNESCO;
10. **Expresses** its hopes that the priorities and reform initiatives as approved by the General Conference in 2011 can be fully implemented;
11. **Urges** the Member States to start an independent in-depth evaluation together with all NGOs concerned of the functional and structural problems the Organization is presently confronted with.

2. TOWARDS GREATER EMPOWERMENT OF PEOPLE

The 40th Plenary Assembly of the World Federation of United Nations Associations,

Acknowledging that, as the world is turning into a knowledge based society, access to information is key to ensuring accountability and transparency and to prevent corruption;

Reconfirming that the right to information, as recognized by international human rights instruments, is essential to ensuring full participation of citizens in public affairs;

Deeply concerned about the risk that lack of access to information of civil society poses to democratic processes and citizens' engagement;

Noting that there is an urgent need to strengthen the capacity and participation of local civil society organizations to effectively contribute to the decision making process;

Invites:

1. United Nations Member States to strengthen their legal frameworks with the aim of ensuring access of information to all their citizens without distinction as to race, color, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status;
2. United Nations Member States to strengthen efforts to promote effective and inclusive participation of civil society in public affairs;
3. The international community to strive to further develop the right to information and participation in public affairs in international legal instruments and frameworks.

3. PROMOTING A WORLD FREE FROM NUCLEAR WEAPONS

The 40th Plenary Assembly of the World Federation of United Nations Associations,

Recalls the commitments made at the 2010 Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference on achieving the peace and security of a world without nuclear weapons, in accordance with the Treaty's objectives;

Reaffirms its unequivocal support for measures to be taken to move towards realizing these objectives;

Invites future steps by all the nuclear-weapon states towards the goal of total nuclear disarmament, and that these steps should promote international stability, peace and security and be based on the principle of increased and undiminished security for all;

Calls on:

1. All Member States to ratify the Non-Proliferation Treaty and Comprehensive Test-Ban Treaty with all expediency;
2. The nuclear-weapon Member States, particularly those with the most significant arsenals, to set out clear stages to accomplish the total elimination of their nuclear arsenals, to which all States-parties are committed under Article VI of the Non-proliferation Treaty;
3. UNAs to work with civil society partners to mobilize public and political will for nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament, including through the education and engagement of young people;
4. All nuclear-weapon Member States commit not to use, or threaten to use, nuclear weapons against non-nuclear weapon Member States.

4. UPHOLDING THE COMMITMENT TO PREVENT MASS ATROCITY CRIMES

The 40th Plenary Assembly of the World Federation of United Nations Associations,

Reaffirms its support for the Responsibility to Protect (R2P) principle, as outlined in paragraphs 138 and 139 of the 2005 World Summit outcome document, recognizing that state sovereignty entails a responsibility to protect populations from genocide, crimes against humanity, war crimes and ethnic cleansing;

Acknowledges that the practical implementation of R2P, including coercive measures outlined in the 'Third Pillar,' remains challenging;

Welcomes the recent informal dialogue on the third pillar of R2P at the UN General Assembly, and Brazil's 'responsibility while protecting' concept;

Recognizes the positive impact of increasing coordination internationally and domestically for the prevention of mass atrocity crimes, including the development of the R2P 'Focal Points' initiative;

Calls on:

1. Member States to continue refining the understanding and application of R2P through international dialogue;
2. The UN to stand firm in its commitment to R2P and the universal values it upholds – as outlined in the UN Charter – and to encourage the application of R2P in compelling cases, and with the mandate of the UN Security Council;
3. UNAs to work with civil society partners to hold governments to account on their responsibilities, and to mobilize public and political will for R2P, including the 'responsibility while protecting' concept.

5. SUPPORTING THE ADVANCEMENT OF UNIVERSAL HUMAN RIGHTS

The 40th Plenary Assembly of the World Federation of United Nations Associations,

Acknowledges the pivotal role of the UN in advancing the recognition, promotion and protection of universal human rights;

Recognizes the significant achievements of the first cycle of the Human Rights Council's (HRC) Universal Periodic Review (UPR) and which saw 100% participation by Member States;

Welcomes the important contribution made in this regard by the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), and the work of the HRC and its Special Procedures;

Calls on:

1. OHCHR and the HRC to undertake appropriate measures to ensure effective operation, reduce any potential overlap in work, and ensure that its work is performed in a transparent and unbiased manner;
2. Member States to fully cooperate with the work of OHCHR and the HRC;
3. UNAs to work with other civil society actors to promote public knowledge of, and government support for, universal human rights and international human rights mechanisms.

6. SECURING AN EFFECTIVE ARMS TRADE TREATY

The 40th Plenary Assembly of the World Federation of United Nations Associations,

Underlines the need to prevent, combat and eradicate the illicit trade of conventional arms and to prevent their diversion to the illicit market and for unauthorized end use;

Recognizes the urgent need for legally-binding international standards regulating the transfer of these weapons;

Calls on:

1. Member States to:

Work, before and during the anticipated 2013 Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) conference, for a regulatory framework that:

- Applies to the widest possible range of conventional arms and ammunition;
- Prevents transfers when a substantial risk exists that arms will be used in breach of international humanitarian law or international human rights law;
- Includes transparent reporting and recording mechanisms;

Prioritize the adoption of a robust ATT with the widest possible participation, including the largest arms exporters, during the current (67th) session of the UN General Assembly;

2. UNAs to work with other civil society actors to support the above as a matter of urgency.

7. YOUTH, PEACE AND SECURITY

The 40th Plenary Assembly of the World Federation of United Nations Associations,

Recalls that more than a half of the world's population is under the age of 30 and that the close relationship between social justice, sustainable development, human rights and peace is omnipresent in the daily lives of the youth. High level of youth unemployment, social exclusion and growing discontent are not only acute problems of social development, but may trigger severe regional and global unrest;

Recognizes that in acute conflicts it is the young who bear the burden of violence without the right to be involved in the decisions that lead to the conflict in the first place;

Acknowledges that youth associations and organizations play an important role in the process of global social change, and that genuine incorporation of youth in peace-building efforts and processes is a prerequisite for lasting peace;

Invites empowering of the young people for global peace and security following the model of UN Security Council's resolution 1325 on "Women, peace and security".

8. SITUATION IN SYRIA

The 40th Plenary Assembly of the World Federation of United Nations Associations,

Aware of the ongoing mass violence and tremendous human suffering resulting from the current situation in Syria;

Deeply concerned about the threat this situation poses to international peace and security; and

Noting the grave risk of loss of credibility of the Security Council if it fails to contribute to a solution for sustainable peace through peaceful negotiations by all parties concerned;

Endorses the statement made on 17 September 2012 by the Executive Committee of the World Federation of United Nations Associations (WFUNA) on the impact of this situation.

STATEMENT OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE ON THE GRAVE SITUATION IN SYRIA

The Executive Committee of the World Federation of United Nations Associations (WFUNA), elected by non-partisan civil society organizations in over 110 countries, is deeply concerned over the grave loss of life in Syria and expresses solidarity with the citizens of Syria who are confronting daily atrocities.

Recognizing the difficulty of the situation in Syria we call upon all parties to the United Nations, and in particular the United Nations' Security Council, to take their role in preventing and halting mass violence seriously by seeking a multi-lateral solution to the conflict in a timely and decisive manner. In support of an immediate ceasefire we urge all parties to engage in peaceful negotiations to achieve a resolution for sustainable peace.

Calling for all parties to the United Nations to increase humanitarian efforts to reduce the further loss of life in Syria and neighboring countries we request the United Nations to secure humanitarian aid and full humanitarian services for the targeted victims of the Syrian civil war.

Noting the grave risk of the loss of credibility of the United Nations we urge the Member States of the United Nations' Security Council to find an effective and immediate resolution to the conflict. We strongly support the United Nations' Joint Representative for Syria Mr. Brahimi in continuing and enhancing the diplomatic efforts of the United Nations to find such resolution to the conflict.

We, the people's movement of the United Nations, underscore the importance of civil society's contributions to the removal of obstacles to peace and security and urge all parties to ensure increased civil society engagement in the conflict resolution process.