



**UNA ★ USA**  
Johnson County Chapter

News and Events

c/o JC UNA  
308 E. Burlington St. #245  
Iowa City, IA 52240

## Chapter Members Support UN Peacekeeping

September 2021

On August 24, six Johnson County Chapter members took part in a virtual meeting to urge 2nd District Congressperson Mariannette Miller-Meeke to co-sponsor HR 4420, the U.S. Commitment to Peacekeeping Act.

Since the 1990s, U.S. contributions to UN peacekeeping forces have been capped at 25%, rather than the 28% established by a scale of assessments negotiated by the U.S. with other UN member states. As a result, the U.S. routinely runs up arrearages, now totaling \$1 billion. These arrears weaken U.S. credibility, set a poor example for other countries, and weaken UN peacekeeping operations.

A new proposal, HR 4420, would permanently lift the cap and thereby reaffirm the U.S. commitment to UN peacekeeping operations.

Participating in the August 24 meeting with Miller-Meeke's aide, Andy Swanson, were Ed Cranston, Barbara Eckstein, Katy Hansen, Jim Olson, Dorothy Paul and Nancy Porter.

You can contact Rep. Miller-Meeke on this issue by going to [unausa.org/advocacy/support-un-peacekeeping](http://unausa.org/advocacy/support-un-peacekeeping)

## Upcoming Events

**Tuesday, September 21, 4:30 pm.**

**Blackhawk Mini-Park on the Ped Mall (corner of Dubuque and Washington), the site of a new Peace Pole donated by Veterans For Peace and allies.**

Observance of the International Day of Peace. Remarks and musical performance by Mary Cohen, Associate Professor of Music Education at UI and her students, and reading of the IC Mayor's proclamation. Co-sponsored by JC UNA, Veterans for Peace, Iowa Physicians for Social Responsibility, and IC Office for Equity and Human Rights.

**Friday, October 1, 1:00 – 3:00 pm.**

**Iowa City Senior Center (or Zoom)**

International Day of Older Persons Theme: "Housing Insecurity and Human Rights in Johnson County." A panel discussion on local housing options for older adults followed by an open Q and A session, light refreshments, and information tables. Co-sponsored by the JC UNA, University of Iowa's School of Social Work, UI Aging and Longevity Studies, The Csomay Center for Gerontological Excellence, Iowa City Senior Center, and the IC Office for Equity and Human Rights.

**Wednesday, October 24, Noon**

**MidwestOne Building (102 S. Clinton) and livestreamed**

United Nations Day Observance. To mark the 76<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the UN, UI Professor Jerry Schnoor will speak on the climate crisis, a few days before the opening of the UN Climate Summit in Glasgow. Co-sponsored by the JC UNA and the Iowa City Foreign Relations Council. For more information: [www.icfrc.org](http://www.icfrc.org)

**Sunday, November 14, 1:30 pm, via Zoom**

Johnson County UNA Annual Meeting. Details to follow. Save the date!

## From the President

by Jim Olson

Recently your chapter board made donations to UN agencies



for their life-saving work in Afghanistan and Haiti. You can help, too.

### **The World Food Program**

is shipping emergency food aid to both Afghanistan and Haiti, where half of the population is food insecure. [www.wfpusa.org](http://www.wfpusa.org)

### **UNHCR (the UN Refugee Agency)**

is helping the 550,000 Afghans who have been forced to flee their homes this year and is providing emergency shelter for victims of the Haitian earthquake. [www.unrefugees.org](http://www.unrefugees.org)

**UNICEF** provides vaccinations for 1.2 million Afghan infants each year and is now providing emergency assistance to vulnerable children and mothers. In Haiti, the agency is aiding 54,000 children at risk for water-borne diseases because of the earthquake. [www.unicefusa.org](http://www.unicefusa.org)

Despite the pandemic and daily reports of natural and manmade disasters—all intensified by the climate emergency—I hope you and your family are safe and find some hope in the work of these UN agencies. I look forward to seeing you—either in person or on Zoom—at our fall events!

# UN Plays Central Roll Addressing Climate Change *and We Can Help*

In early August, the UN's Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change issued a comprehensive report on the global climate emergency. The report described the devastating effects of climate change but concluded that there is a narrow window to prevent the devastation from getting even worse. UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres called the report "Code Red for Humanity."

The New York Times summarized the massive report, based on 14,000 scientific studies, with five take-aways:

\*\*\* Human activities have unequivocally warmed the planet;

\*\*\* Climate science is getting better and more precise;

\*\*\* We are locked into 30 years of worsening climate impacts no matter what the world does;

\*\*\* Climate changes are happening rapidly; and

\*\*\* There is still a window in which humans can change the climate path.

The report will be a focal point for action at the upcoming 26<sup>th</sup> Conference of Parties of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change—also known as the 2021 United Nations Climate Change Conference—to be held November 1-12 in Glasgow, Scot-

land. This summit is crucial if the climate emergency is to be brought under control.

Governments will discuss whether enough progress has occurred since the 2015 Paris Climate Agreement. At Paris, governments agreed to try to keep temperature increases "well below" 2 degrees Celsius and to try to limit them to 1.5 degree Celsius. However, actions to limit warming have fallen short and scientists warn that the global temperature may increase 3 degrees Celsius. Countries are being asked to establish ambitious targets to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. President Biden has announced a U.S. target of zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050.

People living in the developing world are especially hard hit by droughts, heat waves, and rising sea levels. World hunger is on the rise, especially in sub-Saharan Africa, where years of severe drought have ruined agricultural output. Worldwide, agricultural output could decline by as much as 30% in the years ahead, threatening the livelihoods of 500 million small-holder farmers at a time when the demand for food is expected to rise by 98% by 2050.

Faced with these realities, 100 developing nations have called for funding to fight climate change,

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# UN Plays Central Role—Climate Crisis

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compensate for the impact of a warming climate, and support sustainable economies.

The 2015 Paris Climate Agreement affirmed the responsibility of developed nations to help poor countries reduce carbon emissions and mitigate the impact of climate change by channeling aid through the Green Climate Fund (GCF). Since 2015, the GCF has provided \$8.8 billion for 177 projects worldwide.

Germany, Norway, the United Kingdom and France are major contributors to the GCF. The United States pledged \$3 billion in 2014 but has only paid \$1 billion. The Biden-Harris administration has included \$1.2 billion in its FY 2022 budget request. In February, 23 climate organizations called on the administration to raise the U.S. contribution to \$8 billion.

The IPCC report and the Glasgow Summit are examples of two of the three ways the UN addresses the climate crisis: aggregating and disseminating the most up-to-date climate science worldwide and providing forums for nations to debate the issues and—ideally—take action. The third way is in providing aid and technical assistance to developing nations to mitigate and reverse climate change.

We have many opportunities to learn about the impact of the climate emergency:

Every year since 2011, climate scientists in Iowa have issued an Iowa Climate Statement describing the

impact on the climate emergency on our state. See <https://iowaenvironmentalfocus.org/iowa-climate-statement/>

Data on the changing Iowa climate is available from the Iowa Department of Natural Resources. <https://www.iowadnr.gov/conservation/climate-change>

Sign up for the Iowa City Sustainability newsletter and learn about other local resources and ways to reduce your carbon footprint at <https://www.icgov.org/project/climate-action>.

As we learn more about the climate crisis, we must act.

Communicate your concerns to elected officials.

Do what your budget permits to reduce your carbon footprint.

Commend the Biden-Kerry administration for its commitment to climate action but urge even more ambitious policies and actions.

## Organizations acting to combat climate change

### Citizens Climate Lobby and the Iowa City Climate Advocates

[citizensclimatelobby.org](http://citizensclimatelobby.org)

[iowa-city-climate-advocates.org](http://iowa-city-climate-advocates.org)

### Sierra Club, Iowa Chapter

[www.sierraclub.org/iowa](http://www.sierraclub.org/iowa)

### Iowa Environmental Council

[www.iaenvironment.org/our-work/healthy-climate/](http://www.iaenvironment.org/our-work/healthy-climate/)

### Iowa Physicians for Social Responsibility

[www.psriowa.org](http://www.psriowa.org)

### 100 Grannies for a Livable World

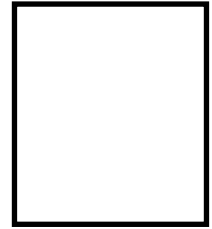
[100grannies.org](http://100grannies.org)

## Gas: Good News and Bad News

First, the good news: In August the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) declared the end of leaded gasoline worldwide, following a 19-year UNEP campaign. According to UNEP, the use of tetraethyl lead as a gas additive has been one of the most serious environmental threats to human health. The end of leaded gas will prevent 1.2 million

premature deaths and save \$2.45 trillion each year.

Now the bad news: The number of gas-powered automobiles continues to grow, contributing to pollution and climate change. The transportation sector produces one-quarter of greenhouse gas emissions and will grow to one-third by 2050.



## Address Service Requested

### Looking Ahead to United Nations Day, October 24

As noted on page 1, our chapter will once again join with the Iowa City Foreign Relations Council to observe United Nations Day. On Wednesday, October 20, UI professor (and JC UNA chapter member) Jerry Schnoor will speak on the eve of the UN Climate Change Conference in Glasgow, November 1-12. Jerry is co-director of UI's Center for Global and Regional Climate Research and has attended several previous UN climate conferences.

Here are additional ways we will mark UN Day:

\* We will take part in UNA-USA's membership

campaign, concluding October 24. Please share this newsletter with friends and ask them to consider membership.

\* UNA-USA will host a national webinar on Monday, October 25, on the theme "Creating a Blueprint for a Better Future." 2:30—4:00 pm Central Time. To register: [unausa.org/events/united-nations-day-2021/](https://unausa.org/events/united-nations-day-2021/)

\* UNA-USA is also organizing a national call-in day to congressional offices to urge support for the UN. Details to follow.

## UNA Membership Renewal Form

**Please be certain your membership is up to date!**

Membership Rates: \$50 Regular Member, \$25 Introductory Member, no dues for youth 24 and younger by joining on line at [unausa.org](https://unausa.org). Please return the information below with your check **payable to UNA-USA**.

Send to:

UNA  
308 E. Burlington St, #245  
Iowa City, IA 52240

**Make check out to: UNA-USA**

Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

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 by regular mail or  
 email (to save Trees)

Circle: New Renew