



UNA ★ USA
Johnson County Chapter

News and Events

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

December 2020

The Most Important Years in History

With these words, from a report of the UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), Shane



Loeffler underscored the urgency of the climate crisis. Loeffler was the keynote speaker at the Johnson

County Chapter's Annual Meeting on November 8.

Loeffler traced his evolution from a student of earth science to a climate activist. Inspired by *The Uninhabitable Earth* by David Wallace-Wells, the speaker was drawn to Science for the People, an organization which unites science with direct action, such as public protests against the construction of the Line 3 oil pipeline in Minnesota.

Again citing the IPCC, Loeffler stated "every action matters, every bit of warming matters, every year matters, every choice matters." He concluded with this "to do" list for climate activists: (1) try out some climate organizations; (2) support

climate action financially; (3) talk to people; (4) show up to public events; and (5) support a variety of tactics.

Preceding Loeffler's presentation, the chapter held its business meeting. We welcomed four new board members: Jerry Anthony, Associate Professor in the UI School of Planning and Public Affairs; Barbara Badovinac, a student at the UI Carver College of Medicine; Amal Elmardi, English instructor at Kirkwood Community College; and Bijou Maliabo, community organizer and advocate for refugees and immigrants.

We thanked four retiring board members: Nittaya Burnham, Robert Burnham, Jean Lloyd-Jones, and Bev Witwer. Re-elected and continuing members of the board are Nancy Allendorf, Mercedes Bern-Klug, Joyce Carman-Baldus, Barbara Eckstein, John W. Fuller, Katy Hansen, Britta Schnoor Loftus, Jean Paul Mugesuzi, Dorothy M. Paul, Blake Rupe, and Janice Weiner. Suraj Moorjani will serve as a representative of the UI Campus Chapter.

Human Rights Day December 10

**Marking the 72nd Anniversary
of the Universal Declaration
of Human Rights
6:00 - 8:00 p.m.**

Please join us for a virtual screening of "White Privilege 101: Getting in on the Conversation," followed by small group discussions.

The film explores what white privilege means and how it impacts most of us personally, professionally, and systemically. It includes personal interviews and presentations by experts.

This event is sponsored by the Iowa City Human Rights Commission, the Iowa UNA, and the Johnson County UNA.

Join us on Zoom
Meeting ID: 840 7488 4181
Passcode: 544754

or email:

johnsoncountyuna@gmail.com
to obtain Zoom link.

All members for whom we have an email address will receive an email with the link on Dec. 9.

A draft proclamation for Human Rights Day has been given to the City Council for its consideration at its December 1 meeting.

From the President

by Jim Olson

The new year promises better relations between the United States and the United Nations.



We are heartened by President-elect Biden's pledge to rejoin the Paris Climate

Accord and the World Health Organization on day one of his administration. We also urge the new administration to re-engage with the UN Relief and Work Agency for Palestinian Refugees, the UN Population Fund, UNESCO, the UN Human Rights Council, and the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights.

To make this happen, we will need to be visible and vocal, communicating to our congressional delegation and other policy makers and opinion shapers that there are voters and taxpayers who expect the U.S. to provide constructive leadership in the UN.

You can find information and opportunities for action at the websites of UNA-USA (unausa.org) and its sister organization the Better World Campaign (betterworldcampaign.org).

Stay tuned for news of 2021 events, including a virtual Night of 1000 Dinners.

With gratitude and warm best wishes for the holiday season and beyond.

International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women

by Barbara Eckstein

November 25, the day before Thanksgiving, was International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women, a prompt to be thankful for homes that are safe and offer assistance where they are not. The pandemic has isolated everyone driving us into closer and sustained proximity to family. In households where those intimate relationships are unsafe, especially for women and girls, a bad situation has been made worse. Even before the pandemic, the data documenting violence against women was cause for grave concern and action. One in two women killed worldwide in 2017 were killed by their partners or family (while one in 20 men were killed under similar circumstances). One in three

women and girls experience physical or sexual violence in their lifetime, most frequently by an intimate partner. UN Secretary General António Guterres pulls no punches: "Sexual violence against women and girls is rooted in centuries of male domination.... The inequalities that fuel rape culture are essentially a question of power imbalances." To learn how you can help or to get help see the Rape Victim Advocacy Program, the Domestic Violence Intervention Program (rvap.uiowa.edu and dviuiowa.org) or the National Alliance on Mental Illness (namilinncounty.org). See also the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence (unwomen.org).

Ask Newly-Elected Officials to Support the UN

The election of Joe Biden and Kamala Harris promises a new chapter in U.S. relations with the United Nations. President-elect Biden's choice of Amb. Linda Thomas-Greenfield, a seasoned diplomat and African affairs specialist, as U.S. Ambassador to the UN, is highly auspicious. After Inauguration Day, communicate with President Biden and Vice President Harris that you support their pledge to re-engage in international organizations. We have a special opportunity with our new

U.S. Representative from Iowa's Second District (as of this writing in late November, Mariannette Miller-Meeks). Outreach to our new Congresswoman will be a priority for our chapter.



UN World Food Programme Wins Nobel Peace Prize, 2020

by Barbara Eckstein

Iowans are used to hearing announcements of the World Food Prize or the Food Sovereignty Prize. Important as these prizes are, it is especially noteworthy that a food program, the UN's World Food Programme (WFP), has won the Nobel Peace Prize for 2020. In awarding the prize to the WFP, the Nobel committee recognized the crucial link between hunger and violence, food and peace.

The Nobel Committee, in announcing their decision, observes the "conspicuous" need for "international solidarity and multi-lateral cooperation" and explains how the work of the WFP addresses that need. Through "its efforts to combat hunger, for its contribution

to bettering conditions for peace in conflict-affected areas, and for acting as a driving force in efforts to prevent the use of hunger as a weapon of war and conflict," the committee judged WFP worthy of the Peace Prize.

Eradicating hunger is one of the UN's 2015 Sustainable Development Goals, and the WFP is its principal means of pursuing this goal. In 2019, with 135 million people suffering from acute hunger, due largely to violent conflict, the organization "provided assistance to 100 million people in 88 countries." Among these nations is Yemen, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Nigeria, South Sudan, Burkina Faso, as well as others in South America and Asia. In addition to recognizing the WFP's significant food assis-



tance on the ground across the globe, the Nobel Committee acknowledged the role of the WFP in the diplomatic process that produced the 2018 UN Security Council's Resolution 2417. It explicitly links conflict and hunger and emphasizes UN Member States' "obligation to help ensure that food assistance reaches those in need."

Johnson County UNA members can support the work of the WFP by reminding its member state, the United States, of this obligation, and by contributing, as means allow, to the work of the WFP at wfp.org.

Back from the Brink: The Call to Prevent Nuclear War

Back from the Brink: The Call to Prevent Nuclear War is a national grassroots campaign to change U.S. nuclear policy. The Back from the Brink Proclamation calls on the U.S. to (1) renounce the option of using nuclear weapons first; (2) end the sole, unchecked authority of any president to launch a nuclear attack; (3) take U.S. nuclear weapons off hair-trigger alert; (4) cancel the plan to replace its entire nuclear

arsenal with enhanced weapons; and (5) actively pursue a verifiable agreement among nuclear-armed states to eliminate their nuclear arsenals.

The Iowa Physicians for Social Responsibility, led by our UNA chapter members Maureen McCue and John Rachow, is mobilizing support for the campaign in Iowa. The Des Moines City Council has endorsed the proclamation, and our

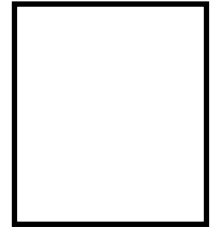
UNA chapter has signed a letter in support of the initiative to be sent to the City Council in Iowa City. For more information see preventnuclearwar.org

This campaign comes as 50 nations have ratified or acceded to the new UN Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons which will come into force in January. The parties to the treaty so far are all non-nuclear-armed countries.

JC UNA News and Events

Johnson County United Nations Association
308 East Burlington St #245
Iowa City, IA 52240

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Address Service Requested

Board of Directors

Nancy Allendorf (2022)

Jerry Anthony (2022)

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Mercedes Bern-Klug (2021)

Joyce Carman-Baldus (2022)

Barbara Eckstein (2021)

Amal Elmardi (2022)

John W. Fuller (2022)

Katy Hansen (2022)

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Jean Paul Mugesuzi (2021)

Jim Olson (2022)

Dorothy M. Paul (2022)

Blake Rupe (2022)

Janice Weiner (2022)

UI Campus Chapter

Carolina Herrera, President

Suraj Moorjani,

Representative

What the UN does

Due to the powers vested in its Charter and its unique international character, the United Nations can take action on the issues confronting humanity in the 21st century, including:

Maintain international peace and security

Protect human rights

Deliver humanitarian aid

Promote sustainable development

Uphold international law

UNA Membership Renewal Form

Please be certain your membership is up to date!

Membership Rates: \$50 Regular Member, \$25 Introductory Member

Student memberships are free if application is made through GenUN at genun.unausa.org/

Please return the information below with your check to the address below.

Name(s) _____

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Iowa City, IA 52240

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