The United Nations Academic Impact (UNAI) & The International Association of University Presidents (IAUP): a Deepening Love Affair

By Neal King, IAUP President (2012-2014)

The inaugural lecture in the J Michael Adams Conversation series, launched by the United Nations Academic Impact (UNAI) on 21 October 2014, was delivered by well-known scientist from Saudi Arabia, Dr. Hayat Sindi. A visiting scholar at Harvard University and a UNESCO Goodwill Ambassador, Dr. Sindi spoke on “Women, Science and our Globalized World.”

The series, named after the late former President of the International Association of University Presidents (IAUP), and of Fairleigh Dickinson University, who was a great friend and early supporter of UNAI, was formally launched by the UN Secretary-General. Recalling his friendship with Dr. Adams, the Secretary-General said that he deeply admired Dr. Adams during his life, and he was honored for this opportunity to launch a conversation series that would carry on his name in the future. Dr. Adams once said, “…the only path to peace is education and dialogue. Tanks don’t work. That’s why we take so seriously our association with the United Nations,” the Secretary-General recalled. Entering the fifth year since its launch at the UN in November of 2010, the UNAI - ten guiding core principles for higher education worldwide have been comprehensively embraced by the IAUP, and incorporated into its thinking and operations worldwide. IAUP was the creative partner of the UNAI under the leadership of the late Dr. Adams in collaboration with his friend UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon; the two presided together at the launch. Five years of planning between these partners preceded the UNAI’s launch.

The UNAI was celebrated less than a year after its launch at a UNAI event in Mr. Ban’s native South Korea, in August 2011 (United Nations Academic Impact Forum, New Partners for Change: the UN and the World Academic Community). Once again, Dr. Adams joined Secretary Ban on the podium for this event – which – due to his advancing illness – was Dr. Adams’ last public IAUP / UNAI activity. The UNAI’s Action by Students to Promote Innovation and Reform through Education (ASPIRE) program was founded after the UNAI forum in Korea in 2011, and was a direct outcome of this meeting.

IAUP member presidents have hosted UNAI themed conferences and seminars in Mexico, Austria (UN Academic Impact Conference: “Building Bridges through Education: Fostering intercultural competencies in education, social service institutions and businesses.”), the Republic of Georgia (UN Academic Impact principle 7: “To advance peace and conflict resolution through education.”), South Africa (THEME: “Global Citizenship and International Partnerships”), Brazil (THEME: “The impact of
globalization and new technologies on Higher Education") and Zambia – with, in each instance, one of the ten principles selected by the host as theme for the gathering. With over one thousand signatories from across the globe today, these ten principles have become sine qua non parameters for publications, speeches and presentations by IAUP President Emeritus and Chair of the Board of Directors, Professor Neal King, in such diverse locales as Saudi Arabia (Third Forum of Societal Partnership, “Scientific Research and Knowledge Exchange”, held in Riyadh in April 2013 and sponsored by the Scientific Research Deanship and The General Secretariat of Research Chairs Programs at Imam Mohammad Ibn Saud Islamic University), China (the 100th Anniversary of Henan University and the 15th Anniversary of Sias International University), the United Nations (Universities Worldwide: Preparing the Global Citizenry, as part of the series Unlearning Intolerance: A seminar against intolerance and for respect and understanding, Faith, Dialogue and Integration), and Puerto Rico (keynote presenter at the Education for Global Citizenship Symposium - Simposio Educación para la Ciudadanía Global - held in San Juan, Puerto Rico). These guiding principles will also help frame a major presentation on International Education that Dr. King is preparing for a high level body of US education policymakers in 2015. They also inform the public activities of other officers and members of the Board of Directors and Council of Senior Advisors and serve as vital frame of reference in IAUP partner relations with the Qatar Foundation and its annual World International Summit on Education (WISE), the Institute of International Education (IIE), World University News (WUN), and its annual sponsorship of a seminar on International Education with the American Council on Education (ACE).

For the first time in its history, IAUP incorporated a very active international delegation of student members of the UNAI’s ASPIRE program into every aspect of its triennial conference in Yokohama, Japan in June 2014. The passion and imagination with which this diverse group of undergraduate and graduate students from UNAI signatory universities represented and championed the UNAI was inspiring evidence that – as envisioned – these principles will inform not only current but future generations of educators and thought leaders internationally. IAUP member institutions host the majority of the ten UNAI “hub” universities, each dedicated to one of the ten UNAI principles.

On January 8, 2013, a delegation from J. F. Oberlin University (one of the ten designated hub universities of UNAI, with a focus on the UN Charter), headed by its Chancellor, Dr. Toyoshi Satow (2014-2017 President of IAUP) met with Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon at UN Headquarters and presented him with a copy of Pathway to Peace, a new book on disarmament issues.

 Published under the auspices of the UN Academic Impact Initiative, Pathway to Peace includes interviews with three Nobel Peace Laureates: Joseph Rotblat, Bernard Lown and Jody Williams. It also includes a foreword by Secretary-General Ban, who writes that “…with the stakes so high for global stability and human well-being, it is extremely important that the young women and men take a proactive stand to demand that their leaders rid the world of nuclear weapons and dramatically cut conventional weapons as well.” Former IAUP President Michael Adams also contributed to the volume.

At this writing there is every indication that the already rich and highly generative IAUP-UNAI association will only continue to grow and deepen over time.
UNAI FOURTH ANNIVERSARY

To celebrate its fourth anniversary the UNAI in partnership with Monmouth University and ASPIRE East Stroudsburg South High School presented a conversation on global health at United Nations Headquarters on Tuesday, 18 November 2014. The programme included a presentation on global health by a UN expert, a student panel and an expert panel from both academic institutions. The event was concluded with an interactive dialogue with all panellists on stage.

Each expert and each student brought a specific issue to the audience, a particular problematic which moves them deeply.

The various speakers in this conversation warned or informed us about how communication disabilities, academic development issues because of hunger or malnourishment, substance abuse or social exclusion impact the children.

More broadly they also reflected on the theme of global warming with the need to change our “foodprint” (which means changing the way we produce and how we consume), on the lack of recognition of mental issues as a disease and on the limited access to health resources.

Academic and UN experts stressed the importance of being a part of the action, the importance of spreading these issues around us and to convince step by step more and more people. They also strongly believe that youth are the present, that youth raise the consciousness of the nation. One of the panellists, Roslyn-Holliday Moore, memorably said: “When we start young, we change individuals, we change systems, and we change nations”.

There is a lot of different stigma and various ways to tackle them; the most important is to act.

The UNAI team would like to warmly thank all the participants and the speakers, Hasan Ferdous-who has just retired from UNAI-for having skillfully introduced the conference, the students Leila Bouchemekouk and Miriam Bouchemekouk (from Aspire East Stroudsburg South High School), Sarah Mustafa and Michelle Grushko (from Monmouth University) and Michele Vella their moderator. We also would like to thank the Expert panel, Kim Baramwski and Roslyn-Holliday Moore (from Aspire East Stroudsburg South High School), Dr. Patrizia Bonaventura and Dr. Christopher Hirschler (from Monmouth University) moderated by Dr. Charles Cotton from Monmouth University.


This conference has generated tremendous response from students

Yacine Tom Wing

After the event was over and our group was leaving the United Nations, it really hit me. I have been to the UN before but how many sixteen-year old, Caribbean-American females have attended three prestigious events the United Nations. I am thankful that the United Nations Academic Impact (UNAI) continues to exert its power in influencing the youth of today to create a better future for tomorrow.

Leila Bouchemekouk

As a young person, I have found that learning about mental health, dispelling stigma, and implementing conversations around awareness in my local community has in turn strengthened the world. I began to see the world around me with new eyes, aware of the impact mental health has upon everything around us. I have learned to use our community as a platform to affect change. My UNAI ASPIRE group recognizes that information is only as valuable as we share it and put it into action. A youth’s voice is the catalyst to begin and change conversations. I will continue to use my voice to start the conversation around the belief that mental health is the most necessary basic human right. I will encourage my friends and classmates to have the strength to use their voices.
Miriam Bouchekouk
Since becoming an active member in ASPIRE, I have seen the impact youth, trained and put into action, can have upon a community. Our group hosted an items drive to benefit families and individuals affected by HIV/AIDS. We not only collected items, but we were able to correct misinformation about the disease in our high school and community.

During the expert panel, I was incredibly moved and inspired by Ms. Roslyn Holliday Moore. Roslyn gave an unforgettable speech saying “When we start young, we change individuals, we change systems, and we change nations”. In the United Nations, many people have talked about how youth are not the future, but the present. She took it one step further and challenged...the youth, students, and aspiring world leaders to start now, wherever we are, to make a difference in the world.

Chloe McCormick
The United Nations Academic Impact’s 4th Anniversary Conference has inspired me to use what I love to do to help others. Speaking to some of the student panelists one-on-one has shown me that it isn’t difficult to make a difference in another person’s life.

Alyssa Mobley
This experience has changed my life forever. I am so honored to have gone on this trip and participated in UNAI’s 4th Anniversary Conference. How many youth can actually say they have gone to the United Nations and were involved in a productive and impactful academic discussion? It has inspired me to make an impact upon my world.

Hasan Ferdous, an invaluable member of the UNAI team, and editor of this newsletter since early 2012, retired from the United Nations at the end of October after a career of more than thirty years, starting at the UN Information Centre in Dhaka, Bangladesh. Hasan initiated the UN Department of Public Information’s outreach to school and college students and also served the UN General Assembly Committee on Information as its assistant secretary for more than ten years. A noted fiction writer and poet, he is also renowned for a patented jackfruit curry.

ENTER NOW!

UNHATE Foundation has launched the UNHATE NEWS initiative as part of its efforts to create a world without hate and where human rights are recognized. UNHATE NEWS aims to be a powerful and thought provoking digital initiative: the objective is to invite people to create news “stories” they would like to see come true that provoke thought and actions. Using the “news” concept it is possible to compare different issues and reach broad and varied audiences.

The themes of the UNHATE NEWS are broad and influential topics that are aligned with the principles of the UNHATE Foundation such as, support for human rights and the fight against discrimination. Young people between 18 and 30 can submit stories on one of these themes; each individual, therefore, will be able to give his or her own take on the issue. However, it is not the person that wins a prize but rather the idea and aspiration. The news will be uploaded on the UNHATE Foundation website where a youth UNHATE community will be created. The 100 most liked stories by the community will then be evaluated by an UNHATE Foundation jury, that will select 10 stories subdivided as follows:

5 stories selected on broad and influential human rights and development issues;
5 stories on women’s rights.

The 10 selected UNHATE NEWS will be paired with an equal number of social projects, to be identified through a partnership with the United Nations Department of Public Information and its UNAI programme. In this manner, the news will contribute, in a practical way, to bringing about the social change it aims to achieve.

The authors of the 10 selected stories will have the opportunity to visit these projects in the field.

Please find the link below for more information:
http://unhate.benetton.com/
As the UN Nears Seventy, Seven Questions

Russy D. Sumariwalla, an active member of the United Nations Association’s chapter in Medford Oregon, spoke at a United Nations Day event there in October. Excerpts from his moving address:

If the UN is irrelevant, what is the alternative? What can we do about it? Do we reinvent the UN? Should we try to build a better mousetrap?

If so, please help me answer the following SEVEN questions:

1 - How would we bring together 193 disparate nations of the world to address major issues confronting humanity; Nations, with different languages, culture, religions, history, food, music, dance, political systems and socio-economic development? And on and on!

2 - Who would organize the fight against EBOLA?

3 - How would we stop proliferation of nuclear weapons?

4 - Please tell me what would we do with over 36 million refugees – I repeat 36 million refugees and displaced persons, currently helped by the UN Refugee Agency?

5 - What about PEACE Keeping? Currently, there are some 120,000 peacekeepers risking their lives under the UN auspices in 16 different parts of the world. These peacekeepers are assembled by the UN from over 100 countries. So what do we do about that?

Did you know that the UN peacekeeping force of 120,000 is considered to be the second largest deployed military force in the world?

6 - What about PEACE Keeping? Currently, there are some 120,000 peacekeepers risking their lives under the UN auspices in 16 different parts of the world. These peacekeepers are assembled by the UN from over 100 countries. So what do we do about that?

6 - Who is going to take responsibility for the UN’s World Food Program?

Now, just think, who is going to fight hunger and provide food to some 100 million people annually, currently in 73 countries? Can you imagine the scale of this UN operation?

7 - What are we going to do about the catastrophe of CLIMATE CHANGE looming over planet earth? Surprisingly, climate-change skeptics still exist—present Company excepted -I hope!

My final thought is that The UN was born before its time. The human society had not evolved to embrace such noble, advanced concept that UN authors proposed in the UN Charter. Thus, the UNCONTINUES TO BE A WORK IN PROGRESS.

The 'FUNDS' Project

Making Reform Happen: The UN Development System 2025

The project, at the Ralph Bunche Institute for International Studies, un UNAI member Graduate Center, City University of New York starting in September 2009, has arisen from a recognition that the 30 agencies of the UN Development System have lived through several decades of a fast-changing global environment and will need to adapt to the new realities, including resurgent developing countries in Asia and Latin America, the threats and opportunities posed by globalisation, the retreat of statism and the recognition that human activities everywhere are driven mainly by private interests.

The UN Development System’s role, functioning, performance – and the need for its future existence – should be examined thoroughly in the light of the rapidly changing global environment.

The present proposal supports the universally acknowledged need for change, if not transformation, in the UN development system to make it more effective and responsive to global challenges up to, but especially beyond 2025, a decade after the target date for the Millennium Development Goals and an appropriate starting point for a follow-on phase whose moniker is yet to be determined.

The proposal has four main deliverables: original research monographs and an edited book; surveys of knowledgeable experts about the state of the UN Development System and its future problems and prospects; a web-based campaign of outreach to disseminate findings and engender support for change; and a series of international conferences to discuss project findings and leading issues of UN development reform, attended by interested parties — member states, UN organizations, NGOs, private sector, the media.

For more information, please visit this website: http://futureun.org/en/Home
The United Nations at 70 — Making a Difference
Committee on Teaching About the United Nations’ Sixteenth Annual Conference at the UN-Friday, 30 January 2015

Join us as we celebrate the “only Organization that has the worldwide membership (193 nations), the global reach and universal legitimacy” to tackle today’s many international concerns.” Learn how the United Nations was founded, what has changed over these seventy years as the UN has adapted to each succeeding decade and what the future holds as it goes forward with new goals for “2015 and Beyond.” The all-day event will be opened by a high ranking UN Official. The morning panel will focus on Peace and Security while the afternoon panel will deal with the Humanitarian efforts of the UN. Historical aspects of the creation of the UN, spotlights on Heroes of the UN and educational programs by the UN will be featured. Best Practices awards and Poster Contest winners will be announced. Check out www.teachun.org for more information and registration materials.

Non-state Actors in Education: Engaging in the Debate

On March 5-6, 2015, the Center for Universal Education (CUE) at The Brookings Institution, Washington DC, will focus its annual research and policy symposium on the role of non-state actors in education, with a particular emphasis on developing countries. The symposium seeks to better understand key questions such as who non-state actors are, how and where are they working, and what is the level of their engagement, with the ultimate goal of opening up the debate and engaging with actors with diverse perspectives, including from child rights, business, teacher, government, and donor communities. Participants will be encouraged to engage in active dialogue and consider the question: What are effective and appropriate ways for non-state actors, including the business sector, to engage in education? Discussion on the implications of the increasing engagement of non-state actors, particularly in the developing world, on equity and other issues will be an important component of the debate. The symposium is not intended to pursue a particular agenda but provide an open and evidence based-platform to discuss the roles of different players in education.

The 9th Annual Women’s Symposium, Millennium Milestone Makers

Each year an International Women’s Symposium is held at the SIAS campus, bringing together thousands of women from across the globe in a powerful exchange of ideas and wisdom. The 9th Annual Women’s Symposium, Millennium Milestone Makers, is a major event in which the purpose is to promote and accelerate the advancement of women worldwide.

The World Academy for the Future of Women is now calling for presentations for keynote speakers. All presentations must focus on leadership related to promoting the purpose and mission of the United Nations; the United Nations Millennium Development Goals; or local actions for global impact.

The Annual Women Symposium will take place May 15-17, 2015 at Sias Campus (Sias International University Zhengzhou, Henan, China).

The deadline for submissions is January 5th, 2015.

Please check the following requirements to submit a presentation for the Symposium:
- Submit the title of presentation, a one-page bio of presenter, a 250 word presentation abstract, a jpg headshot of the presenter, and the three major points of the presentation.
- Include the Presenter’s name, position, address, employer or institution, e-mail address, and phone number.
- Indicate the Presenter’s availability to speak on May 16 and/or May 17, 2015, at one or more 90 minute sessions.

Format: The presentation time is 90 minutes (30 minutes to deliver content, 60 minutes for discussion and interaction with audience). Presentations will be interpreted.

Contact us for more information:
E-mail: info@globainteractions.org
Phone: (602) 505 7888
The European School of Management and Technology (ESMT) Berlin hosted United Nations Assistant Secretary-General Franz Baumann at an event in November which included discussion on joining and working in the international civil service. Dr. Baumann is himself recipient of a political science doctorate from the Carleton University, Ottawa, Canada where his dissertation was on "The bureaucratic State and economic Development in Nigeria."

Lyubov Ginzburg of the UN Chronicle attended the 46th annual Convention of the Association for Slavic, East European & Eurasian Studies in San Antonio, USA, in December, and displayed a number of UNAI brochures and post cards on their information table and bulletin board, also discussing the initiative with representatives of institutions in Russia, Ukraine and the United States. A native of St. Petersburg, Russia, Dr. Ginzburg received her MA from St. Petersburg State University and a PhD from the University of Kansas, USA.

The United Nations Calendar of Observances smartphone application created in response to user feedback from around the world, the Android version functions in all six United Nations official languages, as well as Bahasa Indonesia and Kazakh. It can be downloaded through https://unp.un.org/calendar.

Featuring information on United Nations observances, the 2015 United Nations Calendar app illustrates the breadth of the Organization’s activities around the world. It also provides links to videos and websites, and options for sharing information via e-mail and social media. With its highlights of United Nations achievements, the Android app also commemorates the seventieth anniversary of the founding of the Organization.

The Android app is a collaborative effort in software development, translation, research and graphic design among staff across the Department of Public Information, especially the United Nations Information Centre in Almaty, Kazakhstan, which worked with Al-Farabi Kazakh National University (the United Nations Academic Impact global hub on sustainability) and the Kazakh Ablai Khan University of International Relations and World Languages, as well as with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Almaty Office and the United Nations Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia. The iOS version of the app has been downloaded over 13,000 times.
10,000 digested documents later, a Yearbook is born

The United Nations has released the sixty-fourth volume of Yearbook of the United Nations. This most recent volume recounts how in 2010 the Organization took up challenges and opportunities worldwide in maintaining international peace and security; fostering economic and social development; providing humanitarian assistance; promoting and protecting human rights; and advancing international law. “With this volume on the work of the United Nations in 2010, the Yearbook collection further chronicles the often difficult but always valuable global campaign for a better future,” Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon said of this issue.

With its comprehensive coverage of political and security matters, human rights issues, economic and social questions, legal concerns, and institutional, administrative and budgetary proceedings, the Yearbook of the United Nations stands as the authoritative reference work on the activities of the Organization. Fully indexed, the 33-chapter Yearbook includes all major General Assembly, Security Council and Economic and Social Council resolutions and decisions, uniquely placing them in a narrative context of United Nations consideration, deliberation and action.

The Art-Deco inspired cover celebrates the establishment of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women). In preparing the book, the Yearbook editorial team regularly researches and digests some 10,000 United Nations official documents pertaining to all aspects of the Organization’s work.

The Yearbook has been published since 1946–47. All volumes of the Yearbook collection can be accessed in full online on the Yearbook website: http://unyearbook.un.org.

The Yearbook Express, also available on the website, features chapter introductions to selected Yearbooks in all six United Nations official languages. The Twitter account @UNYearbook provides an historical perspective on current United Nations activities and concerns.

Choosing a Career in International Development: A Guide to the Professions of International Development,” by Donovan Russell

Written for students and others who are considering career choices or change, and for professionals who teach or advise students, the book gives down to earth information and advice and is an intriguing look at the field from top to bottom. It addresses needs, issues, models, policies, and practices. It speaks to cultures, sensitivities, host countries and institutions.

Library of Congress Number: 2013915883.
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UNAI activity reports

To read the latest UNAI members’ activity reports, please visit: http://bit.ly/1k9MdUD