



United Nations Association of Australia, South Australia Planet 3 Digest



AUSTRALIA
& THE
UN
REPORT
CARD
2013
Page 5



THE ICC AND
INTERNATIONAL
CRIMINAL LAW
GRANT
NIEMANN
Page 6



OPCW
NOBEL
PEACE
PRIZE
AWARDED
Page 8

UN Day Dinner 2013

In the grand setting of the National Wine Centre, everything lived up to expectations and beyond for the United Nations Day Dinner. Jane Riley, who had to leave early, was a wonderful MC for the first half of the evening. Later the president of UN Youth took over the role with great aplomb. Lidia Moretti, UNAA national as well as state vice president, spoke about the significance of the International Year of Quinoa and the inherent value of quinoa as a food source. This fact was reflected in the menu, with several delicious dishes featuring the nutritious grain. Lidia, who with the assistance of John Crawford, state president, had worked together to ensure a successful evening, thanked the many sponsors and supporters of the dinner. These include:

The Macquarie Bank, The Artisan Cheese Making Academy at TAFE Regency Park, Justin McCarthy and 1882 Wines, Auge Ristorante, Raw Pearls, Our Place Willunga Hill, Nieovole Distributors, Sticky Rice Cooking School, Power of Mushrooms, assagio, Danyse Crotti, Cindy Hynes, Mode of North Adelaide.

The musicians who greeted

everybody before the dinner delighted us with some wonderful Latin American music and song. All of the paintings with the quinoa theme submitted to the UN International Year of Quinoa art competition were on display. Each of the artists, all of whom had received awards at the Government House launch of the International Year of Quinoa in June, now received Australia Post copies of the postage stamps

produced from each of their paintings. Further copies of the stamps are being sent to our official UN representative in Australia, Christopher Woodthorpe, as well as to the Secretary General, Ban Ki Moon, at UN headquarters in New York.

The artists, all from UniSA, were Winson Wang, Linda Clarke, Annette Rodhe, Prerna Ashok, Johanna Kuhne, Amy Oanh Le, and Lilian Choo.



Alexander Downer speaking at the Dinner

UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon's message on United Nations Day.

United Nations Day is a chance to recognize how much this invaluable Organization contributes to peace and common progress. It is a time to reflect on what more we can do to realize our vision for a better world.

The fighting in Syria is our biggest security challenge. Millions of people depend on UN humanitarian personnel for life-saving assistance. UN experts are working hand-in-hand with the Nobel Peace Prize-winning Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons to destroy Syria's stockpiles. And we are pushing for a diplomatic solution to end suffering that has gone on far too long.

Our most urgent development challenge is to make sustainability a reality. The Millennium Development Goals have cut poverty in half. Now we must maintain the momentum, craft an equally inspiring post-2015 development agenda and reach an agreement on climate change. This year again, we saw the United Nations come together on armed conflict, human rights, the environment and many other issues.

UN continues to show what collective action can do. We can do even more, Ban Ki-Moon stressed. In a world that is more connected, we must be more united. On United Nations Day, let us pledge to live up to our founding ideals and work together for peace, development and human rights.

The message was read by the Mayor of Adelaide, Stephen Yarwood, at the UN Day Dinner

UN Envoy in Cyprus – Alexander Downer

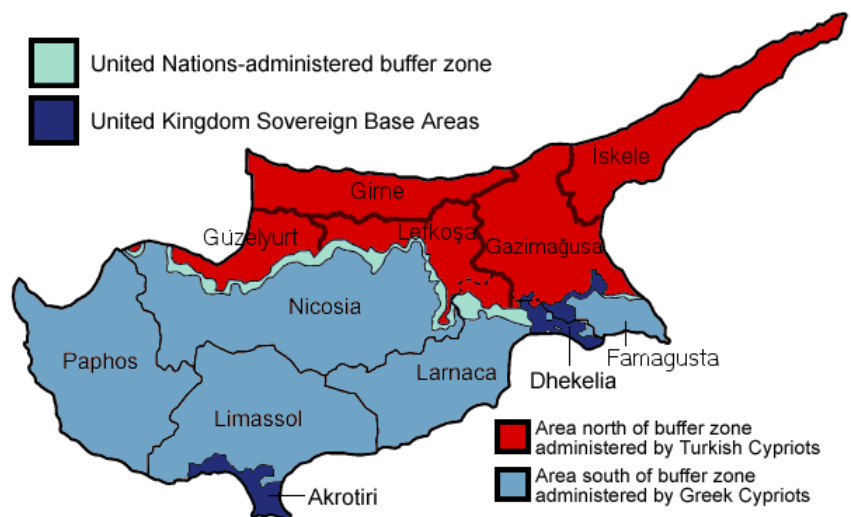
At the invitation of the Secretary of the United Nations, Ban Ki-Moon, Alexander Downer became the UN special envoy to Cyprus in 2008. Since then Alexander has made regular monthly visits to Cyprus staying there for about a week on each occasion. Cyprus was divided by war in 1974. Many secretaries general have tried to bring about reunification ultimately to no avail. The new president of Cyprus is now trying to restart the process. A UN team of legal and political officers is permanently based there – international public servants – Germans, Americans, Syrians. It is a challenge to work with a variety of cultures and nationalities. In a comment to UN Youth, Alexander said that it was very difficult to gain a job with the UN, especially as there are national quotas. The dominant language used in the UN is English. The two working languages of the UN are English and to lesser extent French.

With reference to criticisms of the UN that it is left wing, pointless or hopeless, Alexander remarked that it did a splendid job under difficult circumstances. Attention was drawn to the UN agencies such as UNICEF, UNEDP and UNHCR and the proposition of

the UN being at the heart of the international legal system. Seemingly its greatest weakness is the Security Council which is often used for national self interest. The five permanent members, the victors in World War Two, have a right of veto whereas the 10 non-permanent members have little influence. The position of Russia over the Syrian War is cited as the Russians protecting their own interests.

UN reform should always be on the agenda. Flexibility is needed. Large countries like India and Brazil are not represented on the Security Council. Saudi Arabia's

unfortunate decision to resign from the Security Council is an attack on the credibility of the UN. There may be disappointment with UN performance, but a country is ineffective outside the UN. The Australian Foreign Minister, Julie Bishop, recently chaired the Security Council and did a professional job. As the richest nation on a per capita basis, Australia is a significant country. It helped to secure peace in East Timor, it plays a role in the South Pacific and it had a role in Afghanistan. Australia should play a part in global institutions as it is a country of good values; it is humane and can teach others.



CYPRUS TODAY

Alexander Downer – Longest serving Foreign Minister

Alexander Downer was the guest speaker at the UNAA SA annual UN Day Dinner on Sunday 20th October. This is a summary of the Wikipedia biography of Alexander Downer.



Alexander Downer

Alexander Downer was born in Adelaide South Australia into one of the state's prominent established political families. His father, Sir Alec Downer, also reached cabinet rank in federal politics, and was then High Commissioner to the United Kingdom from 1964 to 1972. His grandfather, Sir John Downer, was twice Premier of South Australia and a Senator in the first federal Parliament in 1901. His mother, Mary, Lady Downer (*née* Mary Gosse), is descended from early immigrants to South Australia. Downer is related via the Gosse family to Sir Edmund Gosse, a famed English literary critic.

Downer was educated at Geelong Grammar School in Australia, then in England (while his father was High Commissioner) at Radley College between 1964 and 1970, and the University of Newcastle upon Tyne. From 1975 to 1976, he worked as an economist for the Bank of New South Wales, before entering the Australian Diplomatic Service, where he served until 1982. Some of Downer's time in the Diplomatic Service was spent at a posting in Brussels, where he undertook a French language training course. In 1984, he was elected to the federal Parliament as Liberal member for Mayo, in the Adelaide Hills in South Australia. He held this seat until his resignation from Parliament in 2008.

Minister for Foreign Affairs

As Minister for Foreign Affairs, Downer played a role in the diplomatic dispute known as the Tampa affair in 2001 in which Australia denied permission for the *MV Tampa* to dock at Christmas Island, having picked up a number of asylum seekers trying to get to Australia by boat. Downer also played a role in the subsequent negotiation of the "Pacific Solution" in which Australia held asylum seekers off-shore in foreign jurisdictions.

Downer supported Australia's participation in the Iraq war. He argued that Iraq, the Middle East and the

world would be better off without the regime of Saddam Hussein and he defended the claim that weapons of mass destruction would be found in Iraq.

In 2003, Downer signed an agreement over the gas and oil reserves in the Timor Gap. An agreement which has been criticised by some opposition parties and other critics, including the signatories to a bipartisan letter of reproach from 50 members of the United States Congress, as being unfair to East Timor as the gas reserves are closer to East Timor than Australia but are claimed by Australia on the basis of a treaty with General Suharto, in 1989. A major challenge for Downer was handling relations with Australia's most important neighbour, Indonesia. Downer negotiated the 2006 Lombok Treaty to put security relations between the two countries on a stable footing, built bilateral co-operation to fight terrorism, people smuggling and illegal fishing. One of the recent difficulties which erupted between Australia and Indonesia was when Australia accepted a boatload of asylum seekers from Indonesia's Papua province in March 2006.

In 2005 Australian members of the spiritual group Falun Gong launched action against Downer in the ACT Supreme Court alleging that his department had unfairly limited their freedom of expression.

Post-parliamentary career

Following the Howard Government's defeat at the 2007 federal election, Downer declined to make a comeback to the leadership and to serve on the Opposition frontbench. On 3 July 2008, the University of Adelaide announced Downer's appointment as Visiting Professor of Politics and International Trade in the School of History and Politics, including contributions to teaching and research, and work with the University's Institute for International Trade. He also holds a Professorship at Carnegie Mellon University, apart from his role of UN Envoy to Cyprus. At about the same time, he went into partnership with Ian Smith (a former Liberal Party advisor and husband of former Australian Democrats leader and Senator for South Australia Natasha Stott Despoja) and Nick Bolkus (a former Labor Senator for South Australia) in a boutique consultancy firm, Bespoke Approach.

Personal life

Alexander Downer is married to Nicky (*née* Nicola Rosemary Robinson), who is a leading identity in the arts community and was appointed a Member of the Order of Australia in 2005 for her service to the arts. They have four children, Georgina, Olivia, Edward, and Henrietta.



Our Quinoa Chefs before the Dinner, L toR: Judyta, Adam Swanson, Camillo Crugnale, Vince Paolo, Heidi Van Gerwen, Pam Tobin.



A view of the gathering at the UN Day Dinner, listening to Alexander Downer

MEDIA RELEASE

MONDAY 7 OCTOBER 2013

AUSTRALIA AND THE UN: REPORT CARD 2013

AUSTRALIA AWARDED AN 'A' FOR SECURITY COUNCIL AND GENERAL ASSEMBLY, A 'D+' ON CLIMATE CHANGE AND AN 'F' FOR TREATMENT OF ASYLUM SEEKERS

The UN Association of Australia (UNAA) launches the 2013 *Australia and the UN: Report Card* on Tuesday 8 October 2013.

The *Report Card* evaluates the Australian Government's performance against international laws and norms embedded within the UN system, focusing on the performance of the Labor Government between 2007 – 2013.

The Report Card overall paints a positive picture of the Government's performance, with Australia's resounding election to the UN Security Council, stewardship of the *Arms Trade Treaty* and increased funding to UN agencies. Australia was awarded an 'A' for its commitment to the UN General Assembly and Security Council.

Australia's performance on aid and development, disarmament and non-proliferation, human rights and gender equality were all given a 'B' – an improvement since the 2007 *Report Card*.

However Australia's performance is not entirely without blemish, with Australia being awarded an 'F' on the topic of refugees and asylum seekers. Julian Burnside AO QC authored this chapter of the *Report Card* and argues that "both major political parties pursued electoral success by promising increasingly harsh measures directed at deterring asylum seekers from coming to Australia by boat."

Australia also has great strides to make in the area of climate change, with its performance being awarded a 'D+'. Professor Robyn Eckersley authored this chapter and noted that Australia's mitigation targets were very low compared with other developed countries, while our reliance on fossil fuels continued to grow.

Australia was awarded a 'C+' for its performance in relation to Indigenous people, with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commissioner Mick Gooda arguing that a referendum to include Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in the Constitution is "an opportunity to redefine our national identity based on recognition, respect and inclusion."

Printed copies of the Australia and the UN Report Card are available on request from the office. Call 8223 2420, 8344 4978 (John Crawford) or 8264 3763 (Ron Hall). Electronic copies are available for download at: <http://www.unaa.org.au/Australia%20and%20UN%20Report%20Card%202013.pdf>

The Changing the Face of International Criminal Law

Dr Grant Niemann, a distinguished international criminal lawyer and university lecturer, was our guest speaker for the latest of our UNAA SA discussion evenings. Grant updated our understanding of the relatively new legal area of International Criminal Law.

In 1993 it was decided to establish the Tribunal for Yugoslavia. Lawyers were needed but those from the Nuremberg Trials were too old to be of assistance. However, about a decade before in Australia under the Hawke Government there had been attempts at war trials in the form of prosecutions of suspected Nazi war criminals. Although the cases failed as the evidence was too old and many of the witness were only children at the time, the lawyers involved like Dr Grant Neimann, had gained valuable experience in these types of prosecutions. There was a real shortage of war prosecutors at the time. Only Canada and Australia had been through this exercise. Consequently Dr Niemann was one of the lawyers invited to The Hague in 1994 because of his Australian experience. In reality this date marks the birth of this area of law.



Dr Grant Niemann at The Hague

Niemann (CNN)

International Criminal Law deals with those crimes which are universally accepted as applying to all humankind – crimes that offend humanity or potentially threaten the existence of humanity – crimes that shock the conscience of people. This law is binding on all human beings.

The laws of war focus on the participants in battle and were codified between 1899 and 1907. They are now embodied into customary international law. On the other hand, crimes against humanity are relatively new. These are not simply restricted

to armed conflict but apply to any situation. The role of the UN has become so important in this area of law as it has been forced to pick up these issues, but unfortunately it is weak in dealing with such matters because of the right of veto held by the permanent members of the Security Council. However, this is all we have as there is no other international mechanism available.



During the 20th century International Criminal Law has moved from a state sovereignty approach to one with an international focus, especially with the inclusion of genocide, for example. After the Tribunal for Yugoslavia, International Criminal Law is likely to expand along with globalisations and the development of the drug trade and the emergence of child soldiers and other war crimes.

In the discussion following Dr Niemann's presentation, a question was asked about West Papua. It was explained that, for there to be a war crime, there has to be widespread and systematic offending. In the case of Timor Leste the number and size of the offences would mean there were crimes against humanity committed.

In the case of the Twin Towers 2001, if only one tower had been hit, despite the 3000 victims, this would not have been a war crime or a crime against humanity, but because both towers were struck as was the Pentagon and because there was the possibility of the White House as well, this whole incident would be classified as a crime against humanity.

The Security Council created the International Criminal Courts or Tribunals for Yugoslavia and Rwanda and the International Criminal Court as well as other ad hoc tribunals for Serra Leone, East Timor and Cambodia. Leaders may defy attendance, but circumstances can change as was the case with Saddam Hussein, and Slobodan Milosevic and it could be so in the case of the Sudanese president. The jurisdiction of the International Criminal Court includes such crimes as genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes. Commendably, Australia has ratified the treaty relating to the International Criminal Court. The judges are specially selected and are independent. A big body of law now exists some 20 years later after the first cases were tried. Every nation can be involved. The UK, Canada and Australia have incorporated International Criminal Law into their respective systems of domestic law. This could mean a legal situation could arise when

particular heads of state pay visits to these countries, for example such leaders as the President of Sri Lanka if he wanted to visit Australia.

Australia's role in the ICC has involved the provision of judges such as Sir Ninian Stephen and Grant Niemann, and investigators from the Attorney General's Department.



Sir
Ninian
Stephen



Dr
Grant
Niemann

As a consequence of the creation of International Criminal Court, everyone now knows what an international crime is. On the issue of child soldiers prosecutions are now going on as recruitment of child soldiers is an international crime. Some countries have refused to ratify the International Criminal Court Treaty, for example, Cambodia, Indonesia and the United States. However, corporate prosecutions are not possible under this form of law as corporate

crime is a different area. As the jurisdiction of the International Criminal Court has only been in existence since the year 2000, cases such as Maralinga are excluded.

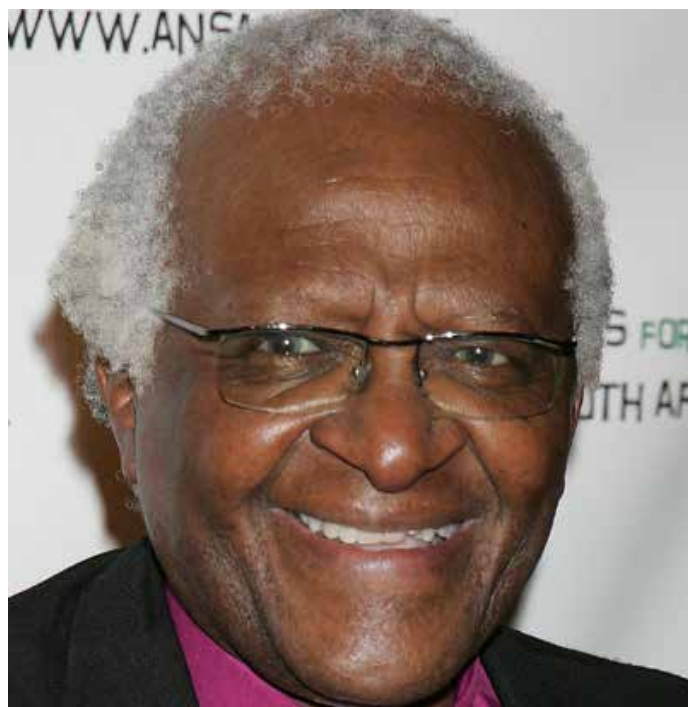
Footnote

Bishop Desmond Tutu alerted the world to a serious development within the African Union as some members were proposing a withdrawal from the ICC.

*The International Criminal Court (ICC) is the world's first and only global court to adjudicate crimes against humanity. **But leaders of Sudan and Kenya, who have inflicted terror and fear across their countries, are trying to drag Africa out of the ICC, allowing them the freedom to kill, rape, and inspire hatred without consequences.***

I know that together we can change this. But we have to join hands and call on the voices of reason at the African Union (AU) – Nigeria and South Africa – to speak out and ensure that the persecuted are protected by the ICC.

Although the non-cooperation resolution was thwarted African states need to do more to uphold the rights of African victims. The trial of Kenyan president Uhuru Kenyatta for crimes against humanity for his role in the post-election violence in 2007 and 2008 is due to start in The Hague on 12th November.



Bishop Desmond Tutu

Nobel Peace Prize Won by the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons

Because this organisation works so quietly without great publicity, its win came as a surprise, but certainly a well-deserved one. Founded in 1997, the OPCW aims to implement the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) which is an arms control treaty that outlaws the production, stockpiling, and use of chemical weapons and their precursors. Signed in 1993, the convention came into force in 1997.

The parties' main obligation under the convention is to prohibit the use and production of chemical weapons, as well as the destruction of all chemical weapons. The destruction activities are verified by the OPCW. As of January 2013, around 78% of the declared stockpile of chemical weapons has been destroyed. The convention also has provisions for systematic evaluation of chemical and military plants, as well as for investigations of allegations of use and production of chemical weapons based on intelligence of other state parties.

As of September 2013, 190 states have given their consent to be bound by the CWC. Two of the remaining six states, Israel and Myanmar, have signed but not ratified the agreement. Most recently, Syria deposited its instrument of accession to the CWC on 14 September 2013, and agreed to its provisional application pending entry into force on 14 October 2013. The Syrian government has given OPCW an inventory of its chemical weapons arsenal and, as at 6 October 2013, there were reports of commencement of destruction in Syria of chemical weapons production facilities.

Head of UN weapons inspections in Syria welcomed the attention to chemical weapons as a forerunner to dealing with nuclear weapons.

Other contenders for the award included Malala Yousafzai, the teenage Pakistani girl who was shot by the Taliban for promoting education for girls, Congolese doctor Denis Mukwege and two West Papuans, Benny Wenda and Filep Karma.

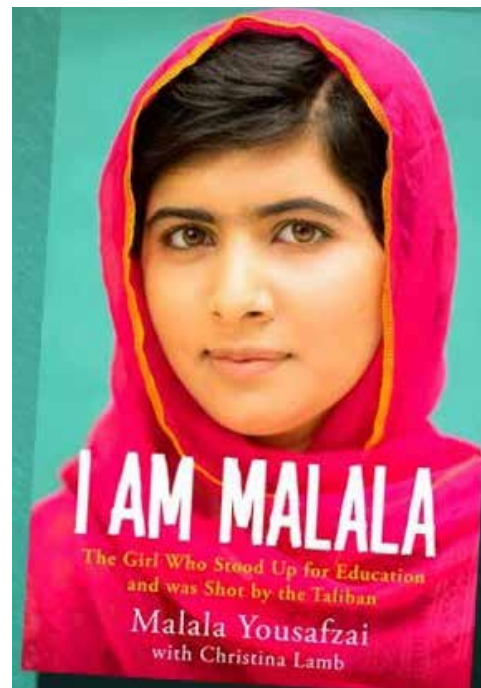
Dr Denis Kukwege from the Congo is the founder and the medical director of Panzi Hospital in Bukavu. He specialises in the treatment of women who have been gang-raped by rebel forces. Dr Mukwege, as a gynaecological surgeon, treats women with a fistula, often a consequence of rape. He is regarded as the saviour of women with this condition as it is associated with much social stigma and for many such women their condition leads to divorce and social ostracism. After returning home from addressing the UN where he condemned those committing the violence, he and his two



OPCW

daughters narrowly survived an assassination attempt.

Rape has become a weapon of war in struggle to control The Congo's vast resources of tin. Despite the attempt on his life, he has continued his practice at Panzi Hospital. Dr Mukwege has won a number of human rights awards.



Malala Yousafzai on the cover of her book (above) and Denis Mukwege (below)



Nobel Peace Prize Nominations

Applications were successfully submitted to the Nobel Committee for two West Papuans, Benny Wenda and Filep Karma, by members of the Department of Politics at the University of Reading, UK in January this year. They were nominated for joint or individual consideration for their lifetime's work in struggling for peace, freedom and justice for West Papua. The winner was announced on Friday 11th October

The award

The Nobel Peace Prize award is one of the most renowned awards in the world and is awarded by the Nobel Committee to those who have "done the most or the best work for fraternity between nations, for the abolition or reduction of standing armies and for the holding and promotion of peace congresses".

Past Nobel Peace Laureates include Archbishop Desmond Tutu, Jose Ramos Horta, Nelson Mandela and Aung San Suu Kyi. The winner of the Nobel Peace Prize was revealed on Friday 11th October. We will keep both Filep and Benny in our hearts and prayers and help to spread the word about their nominations as we can really publicise West Papua in the light of the run up to this historical nomination.

Please take time to read the official nominations of the two West Papuan independence leaders for the Nobel Peace Prize here:

Benny Wenda and Filep Karma have both devoted their lives to a just and peaceful solution to the conflict in West Papua, the western part of the island of New Guinea. West Papua, a province of Indonesia, continues to experience a slow genocide that has killed an estimated half a million Papuans since 1961. The struggle for peace and self-determination in West Papua has remained largely unreported, since Indonesia restricts the entry of foreign journalists and humanitarian organisations: in the face of this silence the efforts of Benny Wenda and Filep Karma are all the more courageous and vital.



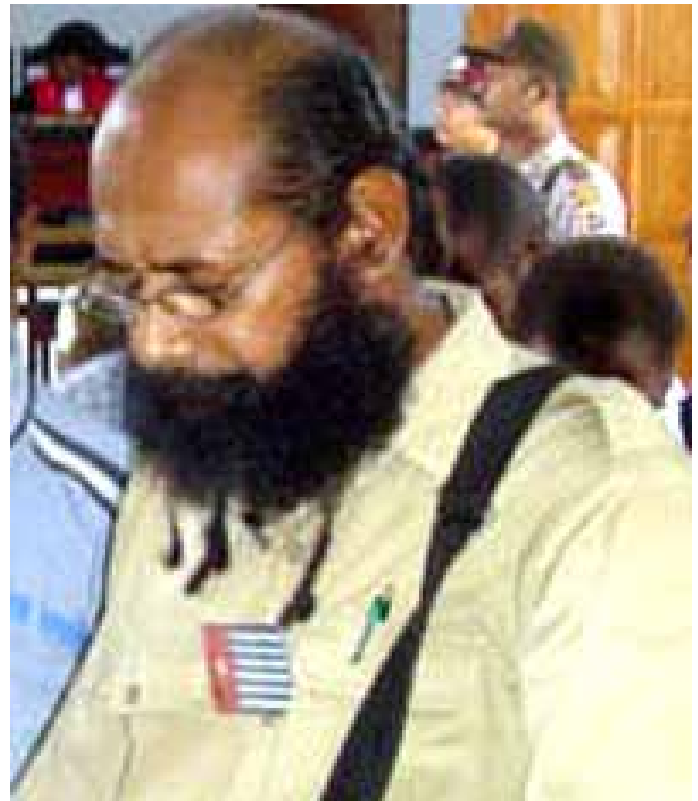
Benny Wenda

Benny Wenda grew up in the Highlands of West Papua. As a child, he watched close members of his family raped and killed at the hands of the Indonesian army. His leg was injured by an Indonesian aircraft attack on his village which left him with pain and difficulty walking for the rest of his life. Later, he became leader of the 'Koteka Assembly' and assumed a central role as leader of the peaceful campaign for Papuan independence. In 2002 he was unlawfully arrested and detained in solitary confinement by Indonesian police.

During his time in detention he was tortured and threatened with death. He managed to escape and sought asylum in the UK, where he now lives with his wife and six children. In 2004 Benny Wenda founded the Free West Papua Campaign. Despite all that he has been through Benny still advocates a peaceful route to self-determination for his people. Through his initiative and leadership, the campaign has expanded from a small core of volunteers into a thriving network of impassioned activists, lawyers, and parliamentarians.

Benny Wenda launched the International Parliamentarians for West Papua (IPWP) at Westminster Abbey in 2008, and has since followed with events in the European Parliament, the Scottish Parliament, the United States, Australia, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, and in South America. IPWP is supported by 100 MPs and MEPs who are committed to supporting Benny Wenda's peaceful advocacy for self-determination and peace in West Papua. He has spoken at some of the world's leading universities and has travelled around the world to publicise the plight of his people.

Filep Karma is a prominent Papuan political activist and former Indonesian civil servant who is serving a 15-year prison sentence for raising a banned flag at a 2004 political rally. He was arrested on December 1, 2004, for organizing and participating in a ceremony at Trikora Field in Abepura, Papua, at which several hundred Papuans gathered to raise the Papuan Morning Star flag and celebrate the anniversary of the 1961 Papuan declaration of independence from Dutch rule. He was sentenced to 15 years in prison. His wrongful arrest, detention, and trial violate Indonesian law and Indonesian obligations under international law. He is currently detained in a prison in Abepura in Papua and has suffered from ill health. He was denied necessary medical attention and was denied needed prostate surgery for nearly a year. Numerous organizations have cited Mr. Karma's wrongful detention, including Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International, which has designated Mr. Karma a prisoner of conscience. In addition, numerous members of the U.S. Congress have called for his release, and the U.S. State Department has cited Mr. Karma's status as a political prisoner.



Filep Karma

PO Box 445, Walkerville SA 5081

Previously Australian Network to Ban Landmines and Cluster Munitions Inc.



The AGM of SA and promotion of SafeGround in SA

- will be held at the **Box Factory** which is at 59 Regent St South, between Carrington & Halifax Streets, east of Pulteney Street. Parking is best in Carrington or Halifax and then walk through.

- To be held on Monday November 18th.

- The AGM will be at 7.00pm.

- A film will then be shown at 7.30pm

The film (DVD) is *"If you love this planet"*, an Oscar winning documentary featuring Dr Helen Caldicott in her 1983 campaign against Nuclear weapons. Produced by the National Film Board of Canada and directed by Terre Nash. It was re-released with other Hiroshima titles in 2005 to commemorate the 60th anniversary of the atomic bombing of Japan. It runs for approximately 30 mins.

- **Catriona Standfield** will speak about recent, exciting developments in the push for nuclear disarmament, including the emergence of a humanitarian perspective on nuclear weapons and how states and civil society are harnessing this momentum.

Catriona is a board member of the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (Australia). She also works as a coordinator with Ban All Nukes Generation, an international network of young people striving for a nuclear weapon-free world.

This will be followed by questions, discussion and supper. The evening will conclude at 9.00pm.

Anyone interested in a peaceful, non-violent world is welcome

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Diary 2014

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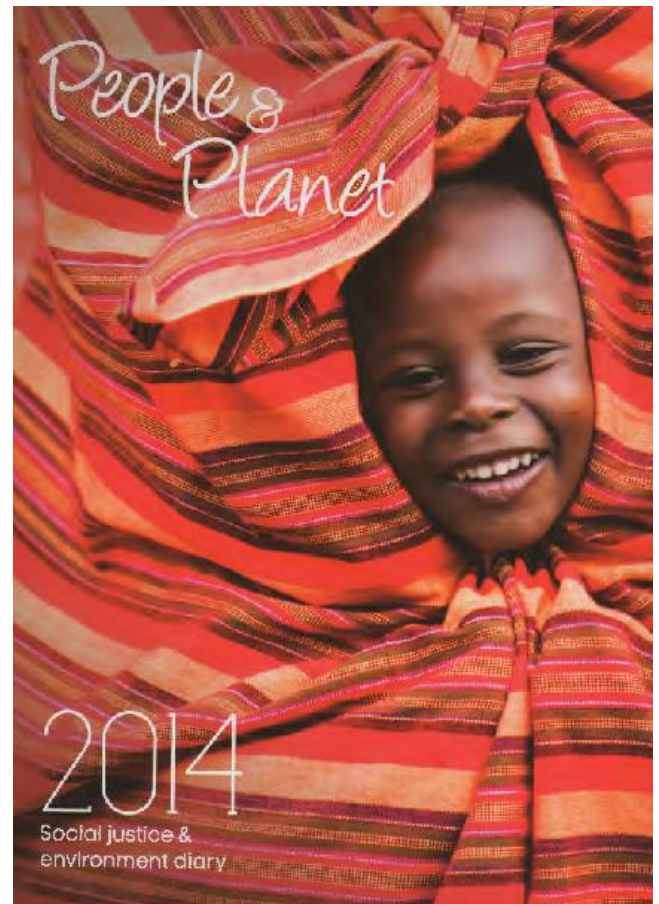
UNAA SA

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Adelaide SA 5000

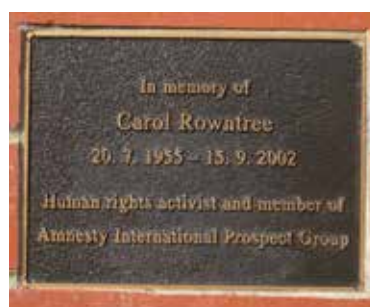
Phone: 8223 2420 or 8264 3763

Email: mail@unaasa.org.au



The Human Rights Wall at Barker Gardens, Prospect Road.

There was a Mayoral Reception at Prospect Town Hall, followed by a candlelight procession and vigil at Barker Gardens on Wednesday 16 October to mark the 20th anniversary of the opening of the wall. It was sculpted in 1993 by Helen E Doubell for Amnesty International. Here are some more photographs of the sculpted images in the wall.



POSTSCRIPT

OUR UN DAY DINNER

A great success. I hardly know where to begin. So many threads came together so very well to make it such an enjoyable evening.

First I must say thank you to everyone who contributed to making it such a great night. First I thank our helpers in the planning and preparation, and in looking after us during the event. Then there were the most generous donors who gave the financial support that made the event a financial success. The silent auction and raffle prizes were very generous and the overall result was not only that it was a most enjoyable evening, but also it has given us the necessary financial support to keep our head above water for another year. I must also mention the chefs who contributed so well in demonstrating how the Quinoa theme can be so exciting. And finally of course all our friends who bought tickets to come and enjoy the dinner. We also thank Jane Riley who was our MC.

We were truly honoured to have Alexander Downer as our Speaker, and as I said in thanking him, his talk was a real vote of confidence in the United Nations. He began by saying that as he has been an employee of the UN for the past few years, he might be a little biased, and went on to first describe his task in Cyprus, before moving on to talk about the work of the UN and its agencies which do so much valuable work. He concluded with comments on how Australia fits into the overall picture.

Over the following couple of days I have found myself revisiting a number of the points Alexander had made, and thinking about

how this offered me a new perspective on my involvement in UNAA. For example, not being one of the major powers, Australia needs the framework of rules the UN offers to make its voice heard in an international forum. Also how we might agree that the presence of the permanent members of the Security Council with their power of veto seems to be something of an anachronism in this modern world, presenting an insurmountable challenge to find a way of changing it, yet we can easily understand its origin if we recognise they were the “winners” of the second world war so many decades ago.

The hard work involved in the planning came to fruition on the night. With significant support from our sponsors, we were able to break the limitation on only 150 seats (and at that a tight squeeze) of our previous venue, by moving to the International Wine Centre. Beginning with champagne and the music of pan pipes, a singer and a guitar, our Chilean musicians set the scene in the courtyard looking out over the Botanic Gardens, where noted chefs had excelled themselves in preparing Quinoa based canapés.

The UN Year of Quinoa

Quinoa continues to provide interest. It features quite often in the cooking pages in the newspaper, and our chefs and others interested in cooking have continued to develop their interest. One item which was mentioned at the Dinner by Lidia Moretti was that the students at Kilkenny Primary School have managed to get their Quinoa seeds to sprout. Their plants are now about 100 mm tall, and doing well. Another mention at the dinner was the display of the artworks by the students from

the University of South Australia School of Art Architecture and Design. With the help of Associate Professor Andrew Hill eight students prepared artwork promoting Quinoa, and received certificates at the Australian launch of the UN International Year of Quinoa at our reception at Government House here in Adelaide. We prepared personalised Australia Post stamps for these students and were pleased to present them to the students at the dinner. Framed copies of the stamps will be sent to New York and to Christopher Woodthorpe, Director of the United Nations Information Centre in Canberra.

World Humanitarian Day

This day was celebrated with another Regency School of Catering luncheon for invited guests (again featuring Quinoa) at a luncheon with Archbishop Philip Wilson and with our master of ceremonies Amanda Blair. Our guests really enjoyed the food, and being special people for the afternoon. We were also able to show the Humanitarian Day video (Kid president interviewing Beyonce) from New York at the luncheon, as well as on the “Big Screen” in Rundle Mall. We tried to follow the advice of Kid President and treat everyone there “as though it was their birthday”.

If you don't know who Kid President is, look him up on Google; for a 12 year old promotional speaker and comedian from New York he does a pretty good job. We were delighted to be able to again present an incentive grant to a deserving Regency student to help her during this coming year.

John Crawford.