



# United Nations Association of Australia, South Australia Planet 3 Digest

## HIGHLIGHTS

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## COMING EVENTS

- Discussion Evening. *AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL*,  
 57/81 Carrington Street. 5.30 to 7.30 pm, Tuesday 18 March.
- Discussion Evening Tuesday 20 May 5.30.
- AGM Sunday 13 July 2 to 4.30 pm. Saint Cyprian's North Adelaide Hall. Speakers: Bev and Ron Hall.
- UN Day Dinner, National Wine Centre. Sun. 9th Nov.

## WHEELCHAIRS FOR KIDS

On a recent visit to Perth in February, Peter Faulkner, our Friday office volunteer (amongst a number of other UNAA(SA) roles), took time out to visit a project that would surely draw a 10/10 approval rating from our secretary General and UNESCO.

Wheelchairs For Kids is a project of the Rotary Club of Scarborough assisted by the Christian Brothers.

Since 1998 over 25,000 wheelchairs have been made, and given away—all by voluntary labour—to incapacitated kids in over 65 countries.

Peter says.....



**THE START:** In 1998, two of my teacher-colleagues, Tom Pickett and Bob Sheridan were working with 'out-of-schoolers' in trade subjects. They heard of Vietnam's Landmine plague .... "We could help these injured kids." So they designed and built and transported wheelchairs. Scarborough Rotary Club joined in ..... in a big way!

**BY 2013:** 27,041 Wheelchairs had been made—in a rented factory building, and had been despatched to incapacitated kids all around the world! Each chair is made to WHO guidelines 'for rough terrain'.

**HOW ? :** By volunteers and donors and sheer hard work! Each weekday 32 men—Rotarians, Retirees, come to the Workshops to man the work-posts ... machines or other ... and get stuck into their carefully planned tasks. There's a different task-force each day apart from a few 'Principals'

like Tom. So that's over 100 blokes—and there's a waiting list! (Taking "Men's Sheds" to a new level ..... ).

**STOP WORK ! :** At 10.45 each day there's a compulsory sit-down Morning Tea (with IGA as a chief Donor). This enables exchange of ideas . . . and banter! It's a happy mob, and NOT ONE PERSON in the complex is paid. 12.30 : Knock off.

**WOMEN MEMBERS?** Yes! A few on drills, saws, etc. An "Army" makes head-rests, tool-bags, knee -rugs and soft toys for each wheel chair.

**THE KID :** Can now get to school; no longer sits in the dirt for hours; has pride in his/her "wheels". The list goes on ..... The chair helps the whole family.

*continued on Page 6.*

# NATION A QUIET UN ACHIEVER—Australia on the Security Council

By RUSSELL TROOD

From: The Australian

February 20, 2014 12:00AM

AUSTRALIA is already halfway through its two-year term as a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council. Unfortunately, the significant contribution Australia has made to the work of the council throughout the first year is not widely known. Having campaigned hard for the right to serve on the council in 2012, the Gillard and Rudd governments were curiously reluctant to advertise their success. Nor has the Abbott government expended much energy in promoting Australia's activities.

Although little may have come to public attention, Australia's year on the council has been very demanding and without doubt led to some significant achievements. It has also run up against the many frustrations of multilateral diplomacy. The numbers give some sense of the demands of Security Council membership: more than 300 council meetings, 47 resolutions, 22 presidential statements, and the creation of a new committee in addition to sustaining the work of the 15 existing committees.

Australia has not only participated in all these activities in one way or another, but itself took the presidency of the council during the month of September last year, served as chair of three sanctions committees on Afghanistan, al-Qa'ida and Iran and acted as the "pen holder" for council resolutions on Afghanistan. At the same time, the highly professional staff of Australia's UN mission in New York has taken something of a lead in engaging civil society groups about key issues on the council agenda.

Australia's diplomatic activity during the period of its council presidency was especially noteworthy. Foreign Minister Julie Bishop headed to New York shortly after the election, very effectively using the occasion to introduce herself as Australia's new chief diplomat, while also addressing the council on the importance of containing small arms proliferation and securing a resolution further reinforcing Australia's determination to try to contain the conflict and destruction wrought by this trade.

It was also during September that the council passed its first resolution on Syria for more than a year. The resolution gave formal legal effect to an agreement that will result in the Assad regime giving up its possession and capacity to construct, store and use chemical weapons. This, by any measure, was a significant development in global disarmament.

Elsewhere, the council took up a long list of issues, imposing strengthened sanctions in response to a further North Korean nuclear test, reinforcing counter-terrorism measures and making recognisable progress in trying to rein in the brutal excesses of the military conflicts in the Central African Republic, Mali, Democratic Republic of the Congo and South Sudan.

As a council member, Australia has drawn close attention to the humanitarian consequences of conflict. Aside from the contribution this diplomacy has made to the resolution of some of the most challenging of the world's security problems, it has greatly enhanced Australia's reputation as a constructive and very capable member of the council and of the international community more generally.

This is a rolled-gold asset for any country in international

affairs, offering the possibility of greater leverage in securing foreign policy objectives to which we might attach a higher priority. At the same time, we are able to support our closest friends on the council, the US for instance, in achieving some of its policy objectives, particularly in Syria.

If 2013 has been a challenging year on the council, 2014 is unlikely to be any different. Almost certainly many of the world's most troublesome issues are likely to return to the agenda.

Syria will be among them, though prospects for a resolution there are dim. Afghanistan, an issue where Australia has a very direct interest and leads council efforts, will be back for debate, while the work on the important sanctions committees will continue. Australia should also continue to press its interests in counter-terrorism and humanitarian assistance.

The council is a very conservative body and not easily pushed towards reform, but after a year of constructive diplomacy, Australia has a genuine opportunity to press for change. It will have a specific opportunity when in November it once again assumes the council presidency and is entitled to raise an issue that is of specific interest to us.

There are numerous possibilities, not least the relationship between resources exploitation and conflict, the linkage of the council to the work of the International Criminal Court and the relationship between the council and regional organisations.

More widely, the council has often struggled with the challenges of implementing its decisions once a mandate for action has been agreed. Peacekeeping interventions are a case in point, but so too are the international community's efforts to impose effective sanctions regimes. While overhauling procedures and protocols and establishing clearer principles for action have been in the sights of some reformers for years, a more concerted push is required.

It is all rather unglamorous work and unlikely to garner great political credit at home, but it's the kind of reform that over time will reap enormous rewards. It goes to the very heart of making the Security Council a more authoritative international institution able to act swiftly and effectively when called to do so. Moreover, it is precisely the kind of international diplomatic engineering for which Australia has a natural instinct and talent.

To be sure, there are many other issues that might properly command Australia's attention; women, peace and security among them. But whatever the focus of our diplomatic energy, the key to success is being selective and not trying to do too much, despite the temptation.

In this way, Australia will be able to look back on its two years on the Security Council with some pride in its achievements. Along the way, it is to be hoped that the government will do more than it has to date to explain its role on the council to the Australian people.

*Russell Trood is president of the United Nations Association of Australia and a professor of defence and security at the US Studies Centre, University of Sydney.*

<http://www.theaustralian.com.au/national-affairs/opinion/nation-a-quiet-un-achiever/story-e6frgd0x-1226831975126#>

## Where The Mind Is Without Fear

Where the mind is without fear and the head is held high  
Where knowledge is free  
Where the world has not been broken up into fragments by  
narrow domestic walls  
Where words come out from the depth of truth  
Where tireless striving stretches its arms towards perfection  
Where the clear stream of reason has not lost its way Into  
the dreary desert sand of dead habit  
Where the mind is led forward by thee  
Into ever-widening thought and action  
Into that heaven of freedom, my Father, let my country  
awake.

Rabindranath Tagore

## ‘Senescence begins And middle-age ends The day your descendants Outnumber your friends’

Ogden Nash



## What might we do with empty plastic bottles? In South Australia we thought we had it solved.

As part of the *UN Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20)* an enormous outdoor installation of fish was constructed using discarded plastic bottles on Botafogo beach in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. The sculptures are illuminated from the inside at night creating a pretty spectacular light show. Love this.

See much more at:

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/riotur/sets/72157630122474492/with/7405262726/>



# 2015—The Centenary of the Establishment of WILPF.

We look forward to join WILPF in activities planned to celebrate this special occasion in South Australia.

The Women's International League for Peace and Freedom has consistently advocated for peace and freedom for nearly 100 years, since its inception in 1915.

The insight of WILPF's foremothers remains valid today: WILPF believes the causes of war must be eliminated, and economic and social systems based on profit and privilege must be transformed to societies based on political and economic equality, participation of women and men, and justice for all – regardless of race, sex or creed.

WILPF's overall aims are to:

- bring together women of different political beliefs and philosophies who are united in their determination to study, make known, and help abolish the causes and the legitimization of war.
- work toward world peace, total and universal disarmament, the abolition of violence and coercion in the settlement of conflict, and its replacement in every case by prevention, negotiation and conciliation.

strengthen multilateralism and support the civil society to democratise the United Nations system.

- support the continuous development and implementation of international humanitarian law; promote political and social equality and economic equity; contribute towards co-operation among all people; and enhance environmentally sustainable development.

To achieve these aims, WILPF's program for 2011-2015, both internationally and in Australia, has the overall aim of redefining Security and its priorities are to:

- challenge militarism.
- invest in peace.
- strengthen multilateralism.

## INTERNATIONAL DAYS March to May 2014

- 1 March Zero Discrimination Day [UNAIDS] –  
 3 March World Wildlife Day A/RES/68/205  
 8 March International Women's Day –  
 20 March International Day of Happiness A/RES/66/281  
 21 March International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination A/RES/2142 (XXI)  
 21 March World Poetry Day [UNESCO] –  
 21 March International Day of Nowruz A/RES/64/253  
 21 March World Down Syndrome Day A/RES/66/149 draft A/C.3/66/L.27  
 21 March International Day of Forests and the Tree A/RES/67/200  
 22 March World Water Day A/RES/47/193  
 23 March World Meteorological Day [WMO] WMO/EC-XII/Res.6  
 24 March World Tuberculosis Day [WHO] WMO/EC-XII/Res.6  
 24 March International Day for the Right to the Truth concerning Gross Human Rights Violations and for the Dignity of Victims A/RES/65/196  
 25 March International Day of Remembrance of the Victims of Slavery and the Transatlantic Slave Trade A/RES/62/122  
 25 March International Day of Solidarity with Detained and Missing Staff Members –  
 2 April World Autism Awareness Day A/RES/62/139  
 4 April International Day for Mine Awareness and Assistance in Mine Action A/RES/60/97  
 6 April International Day of Sport for Development and Peace A/67/L.77 (draft)  
 7 April Day of Remembrance of the Victims of the Rwanda Genocide –  
 7 April World Health Day [WHO] WHA/A.2/Res.35  
 12 April International Day of Human Space Flight A/RES/65/271  
 22 April International Mother Earth Day A/RES/63/278  
 23 April World Book and Copyright Day Resolution 3.18 of the 28th session of the UNESCO General Conference  
 23 April English Language Day –  
 25 April World Malaria Day [WHO] –  
 26 April World Intellectual Property Day [WIPO] –  
 28 April World Day for Safety and Health at Work [ILO] –  
 29 April Day of Remembrance for all Victims of Chemical Warfare –  
 30 April International Jazz Day –  
 3 May World Press Freedom Day A/DEC/48/432  
 8-9 May Time of Remembrance and Reconciliation for Those Who Lost Their Lives during the Second World War A/RES/59/26  
 11-12 May World Migratory Bird Day [UNEP] –  
 15 May International Day of Families A/RES/47/237  
 17 May World Telecommunication and Information Society Day [ITU] A/RES/60/252  
 21 May World Day for Cultural Diversity for Dialogue and Development A/RES/57/249  
 22 May International Day for Biological Diversity A/RES/55/201  
 23 May International Day to End Obstetric Fistula A/RES/67/147

24 May "Vesak", the Day of the Full Moon A/RES/54/115

29 May International Day of UN Peacekeepers A/RES/57/129

31 May World No-Tobacco Day [WHO] Resolution 42.19 of the 42nd session of WHO

## INTERNATIONAL WEEKS 2014

- 1–7 February (First week of February) World Interfaith Harmony Week A/RES/65/5  
 21–27 March Week of Solidarity with the Peoples Struggling against Racism and Racial Discrimination A/RES/34/24  
 23–29 April 2007 UN Global Road Safety Week A/RES/60/5  
 25–31 May Week of Solidarity with the Peoples of Non-Self-Governing Territories A/RES/54/91  
 1–7 August World Breastfeeding Week [WHO] –  
 4–10 October World Space Week A/RES/54/68  
 24–30 October Disarmament Week A/RES/S-10/2, p. 102  
 11–17 November (The week in which 11 November falls) International Week of Science and Peace A/RES/43/61

## INTERNATIONAL YEARS 2014

- International Year of Solidarity with the Palestinian People A/RES/68/12  
 International Year of Small Island Developing States A/RES/67/206  
 International Year of Crystallography A/RES/66/284  
 International Year of Family Farming A/RES/66/222

## INTERNATIONAL DECADES

- 2015–2024  
 International Decade for People of African Descent A/RES/68/237  
 2014–2024  
 United Nations Decade of Sustainable Energy for All A/RES/67/215  
 2011–2020  
 Third International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism A/RES/65/119  
 United Nations Decade on Biodiversity A/RES/65/161  
 Decade of Action for Road Safety A/RES/64/255  
 2010–2020  
 United Nations Decade for Deserts and the Fight against Desertification A/RES/62/195  
 2008–2017  
 Second United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty A/RES/62/205  
 2006–2016  
 Decade of Recovery and Sustainable Development of the Affected Regions (third decade after the Chernobyl disaster) A/RES/62/9  
 2005–2015  
 International Decade for Action, "Water for Life" A/RES/58/217  
 2005–2014  
 United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development A/RES/57/254  
 Second International Decade of the World's Indigenous People A/RES/59/174

From <http://www.un.org/en/events/observances/index.shtml>

Note: The A/RES/nm/nnn references refer to the UN resolution establishing the Day etc. The full resolution can be found by an internet search for that number..

# Discussion Evening—All Welcome

**18 March  
5.30 to 7.30pm**

**At the UNAA(SA) Office 57/81 Carrington Street.**

**Speaker: John Crawford**

**Subject: Amnesty International**

**John will speak about the history of Amnesty since its formation in 1961. Been a member of the SA&NT Executive Committee since 1972, and a member of the Walkerville Amnesty Group since 1974.**



**Human Rights Development Organization  
South Sudan Australia Chapter**

*Promoting Human rights in South Sudan*

**Patrons: Dr Lyn Arnold AO  
Mr Mabok Deng Mabok Marial**

## **SOUTH SUDAN TO FORM AN INTERIM GOVERNMENT**

We have received the following information about the latest developments in South Sudan.

The East African Regional bloc the Inter Governmental Authority for Development (IGAD) has brokered a peace deal between the Government of South Sudan and the now called SPLA-in-Opposition group in Ethiopia. Both sides have agreed in principle to form an interim government.

The Human Rights Development Organization – South Sudan (HURIDOSS) has learnt that the IGAD's proposal which has the backing of the Government of South Sudan, include issues on social, security and political reforms; governance; constitutional review; national reconciliation; as well as reform of the civil services. The proposed issues have not yet been discussed in detail, pending the composition of the proposed interim government to be determined at a later date.

However, strong political divide still remains: They range from the highly specific demand such as the release of political detainees in Juba to a more generic need to reform the SPLM party, and to address wider issues about corruption, impunity, ethnic tensions and unity of the divided national army.

Meanwhile, the Deputy Country Director for the United Nations' World Food Program (WFP) Eddie Rowe, estimated that at least 3.7 million people are in urgent need of food as-

sistance in South Sudan. Of more concern is the fact that the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) has called for \$1.27 billion to help those in need in South Sudan, but donors have so far only funded 20 percent of that amount.

In another development, Human Rights Watch has released a report accusing both pro and anti-government armed forces of being responsible for serious human rights abuses that may amount to war crimes. Besides, a keenly awaited dossier on mass killings has not been handed to the UN Security Council. Ariane Quentier, the spokesperson for United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS), said its findings will be handed to the UN Security Council by the end of the coming week, but that a public report would have to wait until April. HURIDOSS urges the warring parties adhere to the following as of immediate concerns:

- An immediate cessation of hostilities by both parties
- The redeployment or phased withdrawal of foreign forces invited by either side
- Free access of humanitarian aid to those in need
- The African Union to investigate human rights abuses in South Sudan and perpetrators brought to justice

Bosco Opi  
HURIDOSS Australia Chapter  
23 Coglin St Adelaide SA 5000

[www.huridoss.org](http://www.huridoss.org)  
email: [info@huridoss.org](mailto:info@huridoss.org)

# WHEELCHAIRS FOR KIDS

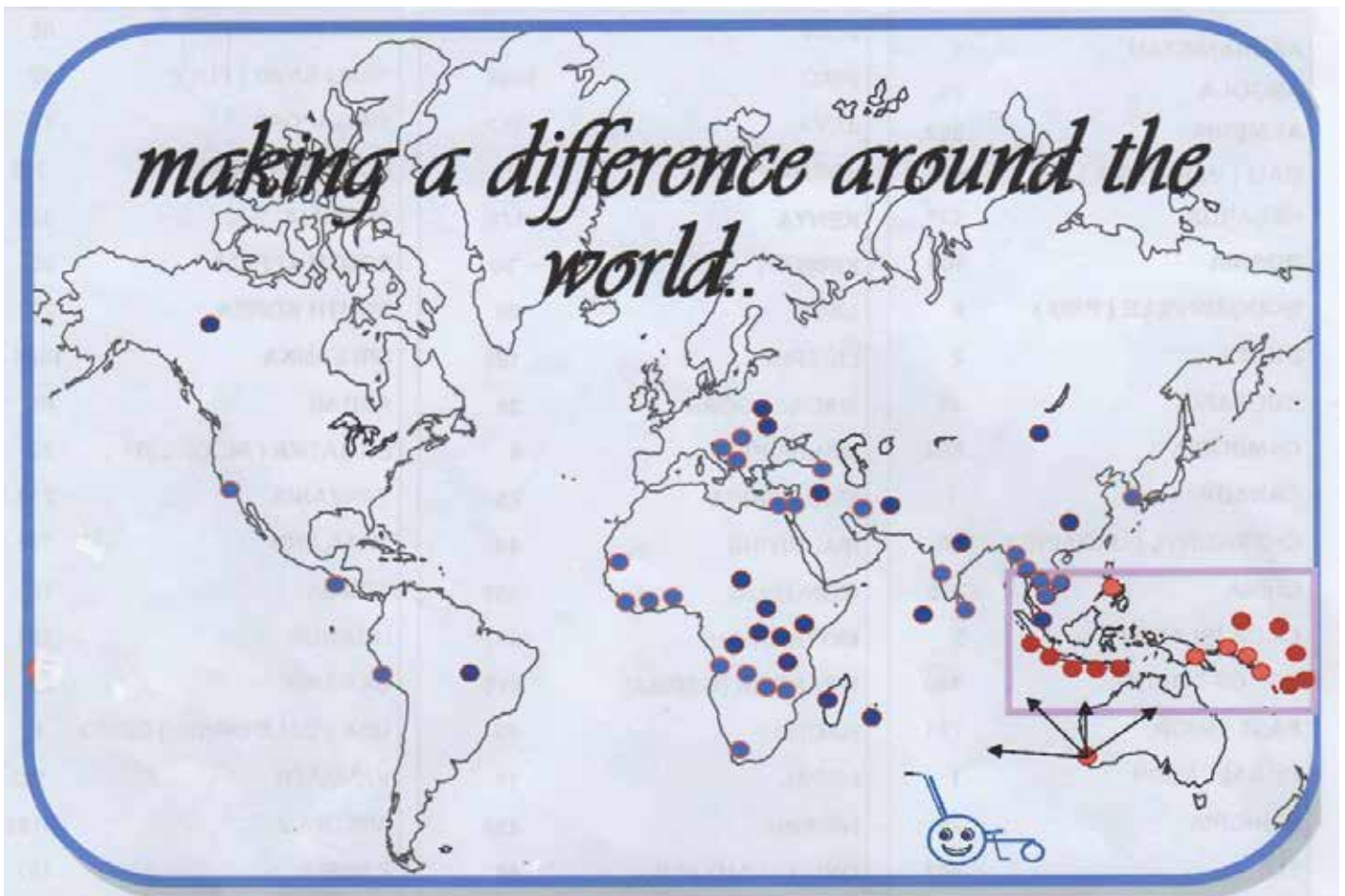
*continued from Page 1*

“Wheelchairs for Kids” commenced in 1998 with Tom Pickett and Bob Sheridan and a few volunteers with financial support from Christian Brothers of Western Australia. Later the Rotary Club of Scarborough in Western Australia came on board, adding a new dimension to the project. They initially made wheelchairs from recycled materials, distributing them to needy children in developing countries.

With the support of a Christian Brother as workshop manager, the project now has a pool of 100 local retiree volunteers, producing and distributing up to 300 wheelchairs per month .

Also, hundreds of (mainly) ladies throughout Australia are busily knitting knee rugs and dolls to go with the wheelchairs.

They are now a separate incorporated body, managed by Scarborough (WA) Rotarians and others, with that Club donating the overheads and the WA State Government funding the workshop rent. The main sources of income for purchasing materials are service clubs, schools, community groups, personal donations and businesses.





# Wheelchairs for Kids Inc.

## 27,041 Around the World



AFGHANISTAN	1	IRAN	22	ROMANIA	131
ALBANIA	40	IRAQ	1948	SALATIGA	8
ANGOLA	50	JAVA	112	SAMOA	65
ARMENIA	302	JORDAN	105	SAVU SAVU	40
BALI	595	KENYA	192	SINGAPORE	1
BELARUS	131	KIRIBATI	92	SOLOMON ISLANDS	244
BOSNIA	100	LAOS	20	SOMALIA	332
BOUGAINVILLE	6	LEBANON	341	SOUTH AFRICA	90
BRAZIL	2	LIBERIA	181	SOUTH KOREA	20
BULGARIA	25	LIBYA	340	SRI LANKA	2204
BURKINA FASO	164	MADAGASCAR	26	SUDAN	52
BURUNDI	12	MALDIVES	4	SUMATRA	22
CAMBODIA	691	MAURITANIA	75	SYRIA	341
CANADA	1	MAURITIUS	44	TAIWAN	50
CHERNOBYL	60	MOLDOVA	40	TANZANIA	1392
CHINA	1245	MONGOLIA	108	THAILAND	334
COOK ISLANDS	5	MOZAMBIQUE	99	TONGA	16
D.R. OF CONGO	806	MYANMAR	760	UGANDA	231
EAST TIMOR	791	NAURU	10	UKRAINE	25
EL SALVADOR	1	NEPAL	16	USA – CALIFORNIA DEMO	1
ETHIOPIA	59	NIGERIA	438	VANUATU	142
FIJI	443	ONI-I-LAU	10	VIETNAM	6009
FLORES ISLAND	20	PAKISTAN	506	WESTERN AUSTRALIA	5
GAZA	656	PAPUA NEW GUINEA	1697	YEMEN	166
GHANA	162	PERU	2	ZAMBIA	367
INDIA	350	PHILIPPINES	362	ZIMBABWE	485



### 2013 PRODUCTION .....

JANUARY	NO PRODUCTION	JULY	317 WHEELCHAIRS
FEBRUARY	165 WHEELCHAIRS	AUGUST	333 WHEELCHAIRS
MARCH	326 WHEELCHAIRS	SEPTEMBER	272 WHEELCHAIRS
APRIL	304 WHEELCHAIRS	OCTOBER	275 WHEELCHAIRS
MAY	433 WHEELCHAIRS	NOVEMBER	305 WHEELCHAIRS
JUNE	183 WHEELCHAIRS	DECEMBER	40 WHEELCHAIRS



*UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon is leading a global initiative on Sustainable Energy for All to mobilize action from all sectors of society in support of three interlinked objectives to be achieved by 2030: providing universal access to modern energy services; doubling the global rate of improvement in energy efficiency; and doubling the share of renewable energy in the global energy mix.*

In a world where so much—including our climate—is changing at a rapid pace, making informed energy choices is not easy. Decision-makers are faced with a wide range of issues, from economic and resource limitations, to social and environmental consequences, to local and international political concerns.

Developing countries, in particular, need support to overcome the many obstacles on the road to a global green economy. Without that support, these countries risk investing in inappropriate energy technologies that will soon be viewed as obsolete, ultimately undermining progress towards their development goals, and compromising climate change mitigation efforts that are a global priority.

UNEP not only raises awareness of sustainable energy options, but also shows decision-makers how to use the mechanisms available. How to access carbon finance. How to set up policy frameworks. How to choose the most appropriate technology. How to assess the situation before taking the first step, and then, to take that step in the right direction.



UNEP assists governments and institutions move from the idea phase to the implementation phase, offering not only tools and resources, but also the skills needed to effectively use those tools and resources. The goal is to enable our partners so they can establish their own programmes and use financial measures that bring renewable energy resources and energy efficiency to their populations.

UNEP provides **three types of services:**

- **Analysis.** In-depth assessment and analysis of opportunities for reducing greenhouse gas emissions through new technologies, as well as the promotion of global norms and standards for these technologies.

- **Financial innovations that promote private sector investment.** Activities, training and application of financial mechanisms that help expand markets for low-carbon technologies, goods, and services.
- **Policy support.** Training and other institutional support that promotes policy development and planning processes consistent with evolving global norms.

These activities converge and overlap. For example, assessing mitigation opportunities provides a basis for developing global norms, standards, and recommendations for mitigation technologies. To have any impact, however, these assessments must be translated into action. UNEP helps governments develop policies and frameworks that make it easier to adopt



these technologies. When the finance question is approached, UNEP helps the private sector shift their approach to investment decisions in developing countries.

UNEP's energy work is supported by two Collaborating Centres: The Frankfurt School-UNEP Collaborating Centre for Climate and Sustainable Energy Finance, and the UNEP Risoe Centre on Energy, Climate and Sustainable Development.

UNEP also contributes to the work of several other organisations in the UN system, assisting with coordination and offering expertise to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, as well as initiatives such as UNFCCC's Green Climate Fund.





## ECOCIDE – AN INTERNATIONAL CRIME

## What has been the role for the UN?

For decades now genocide has been recognised as an international crime, going back to the Nurnberg Trials post World War Two. In the United Kingdom a campaign to declare the mass destruction of ecosystems is being launched. The proposal is for the United Nations to accept “ecocide” as the fifth “crime against peace”, which could be tried in the International Criminal Court. This radical idea could have a profound effect on industries blamed for widespread damage to the environment.

Polly Higgins, a former barrister now campaigner, has already had success at the UN with a Universal Declaration of Planetary Rights, modelled on the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. After the successful launch at the ZUN in 2008, the idea has been adopted by the Bolivian government who will propose a full members’ vote.



**Polly Higgins—Earth Talks**

Ecocide is already recognised by dictionaries, but Higgins’ more legal definition reads as: *‘The extensive destruction, damage to or loss of ecosystem(s) of as given territory, whether by human agency or other causes, to such an extent that peaceful enjoyment by the inhabitants of that territory has been severely diminished.’*

The International Criminal Court was set up in 2002 to hear cases for the four crimes against peace: genocide, war crimes, crimes of aggression (such as unprovoked war), and crimes against humanity. Support for Higgins’ proposal has come not only from the UN but also the European Union, climate scientists, environmental lawyers and international campaign groups.

The term ecocide was used as early as 1970 by Professor Arthur Galston where he “proposed a new international agreement to ban ‘ecocide’”. In 1970 a book entitled Ecocide in Indochina written by Barry Weisberg appeared in the United States. In 1973 the UN had a draft International Convention on the Crime of Ecocide.

*Note: Polly Higgins is taking part in the Planet Talks presented by the University of South Australia in conjunction with WOMADelaide. Google “Planet Talks” for more details.*

### Dynamic New Platform to Protect Forests Worldwide Launched

WASHINGTON—The World Resources Institute (WRI), Google, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and a group of more than 40 partners on Thursday launched the Global Forest Watch (GFW), a dynamic online forest monitoring and alert system that empowers people everywhere to better manage forests. For the first time, Global Forest Watch unites the latest satellite technology, open data, and crowdsourcing to guarantee access to timely and reliable information about forests.

*United Nations Environment Programme, February 21, 2014*  
<http://www.unep.org/newscentre/Default.aspx?DocumentID=2762&ArticleID=10714>

Under an ecocide law, directors rather than companies would be prosecuted, This would give the law much more potency. Much extractive mining would have to be scaled back, chemicals which contaminate the soil and water and kill wildlife would have to be abandoned and large scale deforestation would be impossible. Higgins will launch her campaign through a website – [thisiseccide.com](http://thisiseccide.com) – asking for global support to pressure national governments to vote for the proposed law to be accepted by the UN Law Commission.

In October 2012 a range of experts gathered at the international conference Environmental Crime: Current and Emerging Threats held in Rome at the UN Food and Agricultural Organization Headquarters hosted by the United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute(UNICRI) in cooperation with United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP) and the Ministry of the Environment (Italy). It was recognized that environmental crime is an important

new form of transnational organized crime in need a greater response. One of the outcomes was that UNEP and UNICRI will head up a study into the definition of environmental crime and look into suggesting new environmental crime considering the history of making ecocide a crime against peace.

Opponents to making man made ecocide an international crime argue that it could potentially criminalise the whole of humanity and also that it is anti development. It could potentially criminalise any business activity which environmentalists loath. Critics argue that creating an international crime to deal with naturally occurring ecocide does not make sense as you cannot criminalise an act of god or something which occurs naturally. They also argue that there will be inevitable resistance from a number of very important countries to making ecocide a crime, and that it could be a long and messy business to get countries to agree to its implementation.

*If one doesn't love one part of this earth and every tree and blade of grass on it, how are you going to love the whole planet?*

*You know the planet isn't very lovable all by itself. But If you work up from your own neighbourhood and the hills and the trees that you love and your own children and your own religious beliefs and your own language, you can end up loving the whole world.*

**Margaret Mead**

# CRYSTALLOGRAPHY CHEM / GEOL / PHYSICS

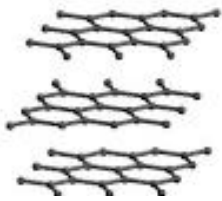
## COMMON EVERYDAY CRYSTALS . . . WELL, NOT QUITE ALL

Crystals are to be found 'all over' . . . sugar, salt, ice, dry ice, quartz, diamond, fools gold, many gemstones such as quartz, hematite (yes, Iron ore). Some substances are found in a non-crystalline form - 'massive' – as well as the ordered crystal shape. Crystallinity is dependent on the way the individual atoms are internally arranged.

Salt, sodium chloride, NaCl. The sodium and chlorine atoms are in this case electrically charged, and attract one another such that they alternate in the crystal 'block', held quite strongly by the +ve (Na) and -ve (Cl) charges, It takes about 800° to separate them . . . ie to melt the salt.



Diamond is the equal simplest form of crystal, having only one kind of atom, carbon (C), each linked by a strong 'bond' to four other carbon atoms (see sketch). This is termed the tetrahedral arrangement. It's immensely strong, giving diamonds their renowned strength, hardness and high melting point.



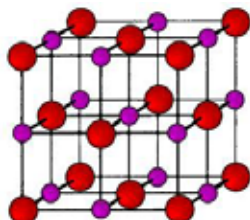
There's another mineral composed of carbon atoms only, but arranged differently—graphite! (grab your 6b pencil and note that graphite is very soft and feels 'greasy' because the layers slide over one another easily (see sketch) having only weak attractive forces between layers).

Because of their different internal arrangement, minerals will have different properties — colour, hardness, lustre, solubility in water, electrical conductivity, "breakability" (fracture shape and cleavage).

A scientist named Mohs made out a hardness scale from the softest, Talc, No 1, to the hardest, Diamond, No 10. Gypsum is No 2 (so, approx. is your thumb nail!). Calcite (marble) No3, Fluorite No 4,(some of it in your teeth), Apatite No 5, (a phosphate mineral), Feldspar (commonest mineral in the world) No 6, Quartz No 7 (rock crystal), Topaz, an Aluminium silicate, No 8. Carborundum, (silicon carbide) brings up No 9 (used in high-class grindstones.)

Next Issue: The Special Crystals . . and why.

Salt (NaCl) Structure and Crystals



Mohs hardness	Mineral	Chemical formula	Absolute hardness	Image
1	Talc	$Mg_3Si_4O_{10}(OH)_2$	1	
2	Gypsum	$CaSO_4 \cdot 2H_2O$	3	
3	Calcite	$CaCO_3$	9	
4	Fluorite	$CaF_2$	21	
5	Apatite	$Ca_5(PO_4)_3(OH, Cl, F)$	48	
6	Feldspar	$KAlSi_3O_8$	72	
7	Quartz	$SiO_2$	100	
8	Topaz	$Al_2SiO_5(OH, F)_2$	200	
9	Corundum	$Al_2O_3$	400	
10	Diamond	C	1600	

## The United Nations and Transnational Corporations

Concern in the United Nations about the behaviour of transnational corporations goes back at least as far as 1974 when the Economic and Social Council established the Commission on Transnational Corporations. But in 1994 a change of emphasis took place so that, rather attempting to control transnational corporations, the focus became what transnational corporations could contribute to growth and development.

An article by Alejandro Teitelbaum written in 2007 suggests that structures within the United Nations such as the Global Compact (see below) tend to favour the rights of corporations to expand over the human rights of individuals. He argues that nations like the United States and Australia are aiding and abetting this trend. Bilateral investment treaties, sometimes called “bits”, which democratic nation states enter into virtually in secret allow multinational corporations to sue governments in closed courts if any government action possibly causes a reduction in anticipated profits.

A case in point is the plain packaging legislation adopted in Australia in 2012. Local attempts to overturn this legislation were defeated in the High Court. But attempts are now being made to sue Australia in the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law using an investor-state dispute settlement clause in an obscure Australia-Hong Kong agreement. Yet Australia is being accused of being a constant stumbling block to other nations attempting the right to follow suit. A report from a public health observer at the Trans-Pacific Partnership laments Australia’s seeming lack of interest in wording that would protect Australia and others from future tobacco trade-based litigation.

Most of the 12 nations taking part in the Trans-Pacific Partnership talks want to protect their rights to enact similar legislation in the face of a United States insistence that the agreement include clauses allowing private corporations to sue governments.

## UN Global Compact Releases its 2014-2016 Strategy

(10 February 2014, New York) – The UN Global Compact released its 2014-2016 strategy, which lays out how the initiative will work to make corporate sustainability a transformative force in achieving a shared, secure and sustainable future. Developed by the management and staff of the Global Compact with support from Deloitte, the strategy is released after 18 months of consultation with a range of key stakeholders including the Global Compact Board, Government Group and Local Networks.

Over the next three years, the Global Compact aims to achieve scale and transformation, while maintaining quality and impact, by focusing on four priorities: participant engagement; Local Networks, a global portfolio of issues, and responsible business in support of UN goals and issues:

- The Global Compact’s participant engagement strategy emphasizes reaching 13,000 business participants by 2016, while focusing on enhanced levels of reporting and transparency among participants.
- Local Networks serve an essential role in rooting the UN Global Compact within different national contexts – and their distinct economic, cultural and linguistic needs. The Global Compact seeks to empower networks by setting standards and equipping them to facilitate transformative actions and solutions that impact the Post-2015 Development Agenda, and support widespread advances in corporate sustainability performance.
- The Global Compact’s global portfolio of issues – covering human rights, labour standards, environment and anti-corruption – has been at the forefront of engaging companies and driving implementation of the ten principles. Its array of issue platforms, working groups, specialised workstreams, and collaboration with sister

initiatives will be highlighted as premier opportunities for business to advance corporate sustainability.

- As the main interface with businesses that have publicly committed to UN values and principles, the Global Compact will continue to support companies in collaborating with the UN and to enhance the impact of business contributions to UN priorities. The Global Compact will seek to improve the quality and quantity of partnerships by its participants to advance UN goals, to enhance the UN system’s capacity to partner more effectively with the private sector, and to illustrate ways that the Business Engagement Architecture can contribute to the Post-2015 Development Agenda.

For more information on the history of the Global Compact Strategy and to download the 2014-2016 Strategy, please visit [http://unglobalcompact.org/AboutTheGC/global\\_compact\\_strategy.html](http://unglobalcompact.org/AboutTheGC/global_compact_strategy.html).

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*INFINITY . . . . . Albert Einstein*

*There are two things which I reckon to be INFINITE*

*The Universe, and human stupidity (and I’m not dead sure about the former . . . . .)*

# POSTSCRIPT

## Membership Renewal; due 1 April.

Welcome to 2014. It is that time again. Membership of UNAA(SA) falls due on 1 April (although new members who have joined in the past few months are considered to be members for 2014-2015 already). A renewal form has been included with this newsletter.

We would love to welcome new members, and strongly believe our efforts in publicising the good work done by the UN and its agencies are most worthwhile.

## Vale—Geoff Dibdin

It is with great regret that we heard of the passing of Geoff Dibdin (1930-2014) on 10 January. He represented the Baha'i community on our Executive Committee from 2000 to 2004. His contribution was most valued, and he was one of those special UNAA friends that we have felt so privileged to have been able to call a good friend. His help by auditing the UNYA accounts for many years was much appreciated. We offer our sympathy and condolences to Geoff's family.

## Vale—Colin Lawton O.A.M. F.A.C.E.

Colin Lawton (1925-2014) was also active with UNAA. He was a long time special friend of UNAA. This included being a past member of our Executive—as President and Vice-President during the 1960s, and returning as a committee member in 1975-1976). His contribution to education in South Australia over many years was well known. We offer our condolences to his family.

## Our Thanks to Elizabeth Ho O.A.M.

Elizabeth was the Inaugural Director of The Bob Hawke Prime Ministerial Centre at the University of South Australia following its establishment in 1997. Late last year she announced that she would step down from this role at the end of the year. We have very much appreciated her contribution to the intellectual life of South Australia, and the important contribution these lectures have made over these years. We thank her, and wish her well for the future.

## Natasha Stott Despoja A.M.

In December 2013, Australian Foreign Minister Julie Bishop announced the appointment of Natasha as Australia's new ambassador for women and girls. We would like to congratulate Natasha on her appointment.

## Newsletter

I would like to hear from our members and friends about what they might like to see in our newsletter. Please email Ron Hall, our editor at [sec@unaasa.org.au](mailto:sec@unaasa.org.au), or me at [pres@unaasa.org.au](mailto:pres@unaasa.org.au) or phone 8344 4978, and let us know what we can do to make it more interesting, and the sort of thing you would like us to cover.

We are greatly appreciative of the help from Grandparents for Grandchildren (GFG) in being able to print it in colour. I had

resigned myself to only the email version having colour; but GFG have made a great difference to the print version as well.

I have previously said that our UNAA(SA) goal is to inform people in SA about the UN, its agencies, and what they are doing, and our newsletter is one means of doing this. Therefore I am happy to see it circulated more widely than just to our UNAA(SA) members (especially the email version that only needs an email address to be added to the distribution list with no other cost).

At the same time, I feel many of us really prefer to the paper version, and we are more than happy to post it to anyone who is likely to get around to reading it. If they become a member as well, to me that is a bonus.

## UN Decades, Years, Weeks and Days.

At our planning day last week we talked about the various United Nations observances, and how we are so often unaware of the occasion. Included in this newsletter there is a list of those falling in the next three months (so they go a little past the due date of our next newsletter). Let us know if you think they are of interest.

## Our regular Discussion Evening

We will continue our discussion evenings through 2014 in March, May, July, September and November. See the notice for our March meeting in this newsletter. Last year they were most successful with a small group able to hear about subjects of interest in an informal small group.

So far there has been no risk of the attendance exceeding the limited capacity of our office. Having to find a larger place to meet would be a minor problem, and one easily fixed. On March 18 at 6.30 for 7 pm we will hear about Amnesty International and its history.

## Report Card: Australia and the UN 2013

Over recent years UNAA has asked a number of eminent Australians to prepare a report card on our performance in the UN. We have copies available that we can email or post. If you would like a copy please contact me by email on [pres@unaasa.org.au](mailto:pres@unaasa.org.au), or by phone 8344 4978 (or look in at the office).

## International Year of Solidarity with the Palestinian People

Late last year the General Assembly in Resolution 68/12, 26 November 2013 decided to proclaim 2014 the *International Year of Solidarity with the Palestinian People*.

It joins the Years of *Crystallography*, *Family Farming* and *Small Island Developing States* as the subject of our observances for the year of 2014.

John Crawford  
President, March 2014.