



United Nations Association
of the United States of America
New York Chapter

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We Bring the U.N. to You

Winter/Spring 2009

UNA-NY's Worldview Institute Begins Its Third Semester

On January 14, 2009, twenty-seven business executives came together for the opening of our 2009 Spring Worldview Institute session. We have had an excellent response to our course and have a wait list of interested people. The size of these classes is designed to facilitate informal discussions with the seminar presenters in each session.



The semesters are comprised of ten sessions and are held at different missions to the United Nations. Each session presents a different area of discussion from global finance to the environment, to geopolitics. The seminars are taught by academics from local universities, ambassadors, private sector CEO's and senior managers.

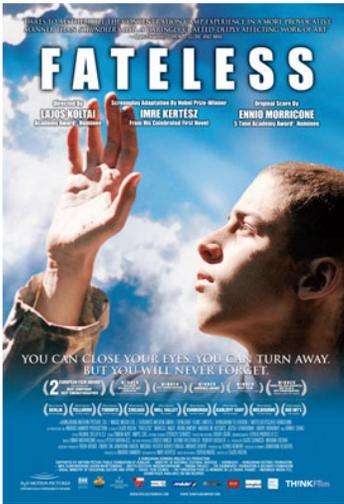
This semester we included a tour of the United Nations, which was very well received. To add to the atmosphere of the discussions, we provide dinner from the different regions under discussion. As the program is conducted in the evenings, the dinner becomes a welcome venue for further networking and dialogue.

Seminar topics of discussion this term are the Middle East, Latin America, Pakistan, and global finance. We are very pleased to have presenters that include Ambassador Haroon of Pakistan, Ambassador Khazaei of Iran, Dr. Akporji from the World Bank, John Authers from the Financial Times and Mr. Murakami, CEO of Toray Industries of America. For information about the Worldview Institute and photos, visit http://www.unanyc.org/worldview_institute



"I have made lasting relationships with fellow classmates and other UNA members and guest speakers. I especially enjoyed the breakout sessions. The invaluable seminars taught me about globalization, the water crisis, human trafficking and pushed me to go the extra mile to heighten my awareness and sensitivity to other cultures."

Christie Desir
Worldview Institute graduate 2007



UNA-NY Commemorates International Holocaust Remembrance Day Through Film

On January 29, fifty UNA-NY members filled the state-of-the-art screening room of the Tribeca Grand Hotel to view the Hungarian film, "Fateless."

This film was selected in particular to mark and recognize the adoption by the General Assembly of January 27 as International Holocaust Remembrance Day. The date was chosen because the liberation of the Auschwitz death camp occurred on that day. UN member states are urged to develop educational programs to instill the memory of the tragedy in future generations to prevent genocide from ever occurring again.

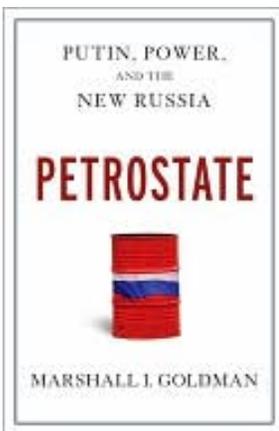
"Fateless" is a moving tale of a Hungarian Jewish boy who survives the incredible suffering of the concentration camps and tries to find the meaning of his past. Largely autobiographical, the story was based on the 2002 Nobel Prize-winning novel by Hungarian author, Imre Kertesz. After the screening, we were pleased to hear from Ambassador Viktor Polgar, Consul General of Hungary, who gave us background on the Jewish communities in Europe today and during the war.

Please visit our website for other screenings during the year from filmmakers, whose work documents what life is like in other parts of the world.

2008-2009 Program Year Continues

Our program committee continued to bring fresh and important programs to our members during the fall. We opened our year in September 2008 with a program on "Women's Empowerment and Development," with Isobel Coleman from the Council on Foreign Relations. She discussed the link between women's empowerment and social, political and economic development. As research has shown, when women and girls are given access to quality education and to capital, they are able to improve the health, literacy, productivity and well-being of their society fundamentally and dramatically.

Isobel Coleman →



On February 10, 2009, we hosted Dr. Marshall Goldman who discussed his latest book, "The Petrostate: Putin, Power and the New Russia." Dr. Goldman was Associate Director of the Davis Center for Russian Studies at Harvard University before his retirement. In his revealing book, he chronicles Russia's dramatic reemergence on the world stage, illuminating the key reason for its rebirth: the use of its ever-expanding energy wealth to reassert its traditional great power ambitions. His presentation was followed by a book signing.

Ambassador Series

Our Ambassador Series, co-hosted by the Columbia University Club of New York, has been a great success. Ambassador Khalilzad of the United States launched the series as our first speaker in April 2008 and this past fall we hosted, Ambassador Maged Abdelaziz of Egypt, who spoke about Egypt and the Middle East.

Amb. Abdelaziz (left) →

More photos at http://www.columbiaclub.org/ambassador_abdelazoz.html.





Our third speaker was Ambassador Heraldo Munoz of Chile, who discussed his recent book, "The Dictator's Shadow: Life Under Augusto Pinochet," which was published in September, 2008. Ambassador Munoz gave the audience a candid recollection of his extraordinary personal experiences during and after that period in Chile.

← *Amb. Munoz is pictured here with Mrs. Munoz (r) and UNA-NY board member Marueen Basquill-Ruf.*

View all of the photographs from this event at

http://www.columbiacub.org/Third_Ambassador_Series=Heraldo%20Munoz_Chilean_Ambassador_United_Nations.htm

In February, we were pleased to host Ambassador Gabriela Shalev, Israel's ambassador to the United Nations. She began her tenure as Israel's 14th ambassador at the United Nations last fall, the first time a woman has been appointed to this post.

Amb. Shalev addresses our guests. →

View all of the photographs from this event at

http://steveduncanphotos.com/web/CUCNY_021809_Gallery/



Film Series

As part of our continuing **Film Series**, and in observance of International Women's Day, UNA-NY presented a screening of "Pray the Devil Back to Hell" on Wednesday, **March 4** at the Tribeca Grand Hotel. This film is a gripping account of a group of brave and visionary women who demanded peace for Liberia, a nation torn to shreds by a decades old civil war. The film recounts the courageous efforts of Liberian women to overcome and end years of warlord violence. Combining contemporary interviews, archival images, and scenes of present-day Liberia, the film recounts the experiences and memories of the women who stood up to their country's tyrannical leader and brutal warlords, in order to bring peace to their tormented country.

Still to come...

Dr. Linda Stillman – a specialist in cultural communication, interpersonal relations and gender issues – is actively involved with the UN in various capacities as an expert in communication, intercultural relations and social development issues. On the evening of **March 19**, Dr. Stillman will speak to UNA-NY members and guests about the Sophia Women's World Conference to be held in March 2010 in Sofia, Bulgaria.

On Thursday, **April 2**, UNA-NY will host the first in a series of career-oriented events this year beginning with "**Careers at the United Nations: A World of Opportunities**" at the Hungarian Mission to the U.N. Guest speakers will be Nelly Keita from the Office of the United Nations Human Resources Department and John Ericson, Chief of the United Nations Outreach Unit. If you are interested in pursuing international careers in the State Department, NGO's or the private sector, please look out for our career counseling programs during the course of the year. You will have an opportunity to meet, speak and network with international personnel who can provide solid advice - and share their experiences.

The **Annual Meeting of the United Nations Association of New York** is scheduled to take place on Tuesday, **May 5** at Steelcase, Inc., 4 Columbus Circle. Our keynote speaker will be Radhika Coomaraswamy, United Nations Under-Secretary General for Children and Armed Conflict.

For specifics on these events and a complete listing of upcoming programs, visit the Events Calendar on our website at <http://www.unanyc.org/events>. Please note that most events are free to UNA members and while some programs are exclusively for members only, guests are welcome to most. Please visit the website for more information, including admission costs and reservation requirements.

Message from the President

Peter Rajsingh

We greet 2009 with renewed hope for a more active and responsibly engaged United States in the international community. Clearly, the array of global challenges—from the financial crisis to climate change to conflict resolution—need to be addressed with a new spirit of multilateralism and accord.

We are also facing a global economic crisis of unprecedented proportions. Losses in banks and the shadow banking system around the world amount to trillions of dollars. Central banks are obliged to backstop failing financial institutions to maintain confidence and obviate bank failure and contagion effects of diffuse counterparty risk. And governments are attempting aggressive fiscal stimulus measures to attempt to bolster drastically slowing economies. Several key questions come to mind. What will be the impact on international resolve to tackle issues such as global warming, sustainable development etc; will the crisis strengthen multilateralism and global community or yield protectionism, exacerbate conflict and provoke breakdowns in international institutions; and who will be the winners and losers, i.e. which institutions, industries, or countries will fail given limited resources to prop up everything. How these issues unfold will bear significantly on the future.

Finally, we are happy to report the on-going success of a number of our core program activities such as the monthly programs, the Ambassador series and the Worldview Institute. We also engaged in a collaborative project with UNHCR, the UN refugee agency in Afghanistan, funding digging wells and constructing 10 water points to help people in the region. We thank you warmly for your support and look forward to a productive year.



Message from the Executive Director

Ann Nicol

This year we look back on a collaborative project with USA for UNHCR, the United Nations Refugee Agency, well executed in Afghanistan. Financial support from UNA-NY made it possible for UNHCR to dig wells and construct 10 water points that now provide clean running water to more than 2000 villagers in the Central and Eastern regions of Afghanistan.

The Worldview Institute continues to attract capacity enrollment from international business managers working in New York City and has been generously sponsored this year with a grant from Toray Industries, Inc., of Japan.

Our new US ambassador to the United Nations, Susan Rice, presented her credentials to Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon at the United Nations on January 26. We hope to be able to present her to you during the course of the year.

Our momentum is strong and healthy at this time, but it can only be maintained with your generous support. We thank all of the sponsors and guests at our gala who from one year to another provide a large proportion of our income.

I look forward to working with you again this year, implementing your great ideas and meeting you at our programs and events.

"President Obama's view is clear, that our security and well-being can best be advanced in cooperation and in partnership with other nations. And there is no more important forum, for that effective cooperation, than the United Nations. I will listen. I will engage."

U.S. Ambassador Susan Rice

Ambassador Joseph Verner Reed Receives UNA-NY Distinguished Service Award 2008

The UNA-NY 2008 Distinguished Service Award was presented to Ambassador Joseph Verner Reed on May 15, 2008 at the United Nations by NY chapter President, Dr. Peter Rajasingh (at right) and Executive Director, Ann Nicol.

The Search Committee selected and honored Ambassador Reed for his tireless personal service to the chapter and for his deep appreciation for international ideals. We are deeply indebted to Ambassador Reed for his many years of advice, counsel and dedication.



In the News –

UNA-NY and USA for UNHCR Complete Ten Water Points in Central and Eastern Afghanistan



The United Nations Association of New York in partnership with USA for UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency, have completed the construction of ten water points in the central and eastern regions of Afghanistan to benefit returning Afghan refugees. With the support of UNA-NY, the UN Refugee Agency was able to construct ten wells in these two regions as part of the agency's larger initiative to construct 375 wells throughout the country. These wells are benefiting returnee and local populations in five villages whose water resources had been badly overstretched due to large numbers of returnees. The wells have contributed both to the smooth re-integration of returning populations as well as to the overall health and stability of the regions. The total beneficiaries of the wells are 2,070 people.

The remarkable impact made through UNA-NY's contribution has been life changing for the vulnerable men, women and children in these villages. The beneficiaries expressed deep gratitude for the wells and explained to local staff that they felt the wells were a "gift from God." For a detailed report please view **Safe Water in Afghanistan** at

http://www.unanyc.org/news/2009/20090110_safe_water_in_afghanistan.pdf.



UNA-NY Hosts Annual Gala Drawing Attention to Climate Change

On October 23, 2008 the United Nations Association of New York honored Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon for his work on global climate change. Also honored were President Olafur Ragnar Grimsson of Iceland and Mr. Sadayuki Sakakibara, President of Toray Industries, Inc. of Japan.



Global climate change has increasingly been the subject of discussions at the United Nations in the past year. In accepting the award, the Secretary-General added that it paid tribute to all of the scientists, advocates and others who have done so much at the United Nations to advance the climate change agenda over the years. He said "many scientists and other experts believe fervently that clean energy will be the investment wave of the future."

← Mr. Sakakibara (pictured here with the Secretary-General) accepted the award on behalf of his company, Toray Industries, Inc. He emphasized the involvement of Toray

in climate change for the past 30 years. President Grimsson of Iceland briefly outlined his country's position and efforts on climate change in a video message.

Guests and dignitaries who supported the event dined in the Delegates Dining Room after a reception and cocktails in the Visitors Lobby of the United Nations Headquarters. See more photos from the gala dinner at

<http://picasaweb.google.com/friends.of.unany/UNANY2008HumanitarianAwardsDinner#>



Linking Girls to a Global Future

Twenty-six students from the Trenton NJ chartered school, Young Scholars, and from the New Brunswick Public School District went on a guided tour of the United Nations on Tuesday, November 18, 2008.



The United Nations Association of New York partnered with The Central New Jersey Chapter of the Links Inc. through their project "Linking Girls to a Global Future." The project tries to engage and sensitize adolescent girls to the global endeavors and challenges of women around the world, in addition to making them aware of global career opportunities.

The students also got together for a private panel presentation and discussion with two ambassadors' wives, Mrs. Jurate Cekuoliene of Lithuania and Mrs. Virginia Davide from the Philippines. Miss Josiane Karege of the Rwanda Mission to the UN also made a presentation on Rwanda and the Executive Director of UNA-NY, Ann Nicol, described growing up in Hungary and her career journey.

The students enjoyed themselves, from all reports, which suggests that this outreach could be extended. Many were persuaded that education is the key to a successful global career.

Board Membership

This year our Board of Directors saw the transition or retirement of four members. We said good-bye to Shirley Wise, a solid member of the Program Committee; Jutta Bertram-Nothnagel, who we trust will continue to give us her wise counsel as a member of the Advisory Council; Michael Galligan, a strong fundraiser on the board; and Jackie Shapiro, a valuable link to the Committee on the Status of Women. We are also sorry to say farewell to Monique Golby, who has stepped down from our Advisory Council. We are grateful for the time, advice and many years of commitment each has given to the United Nations Association of New York.



We are pleased to welcome Dr. Chonita Spencer (left) to our Board of Directors. Chonita is a District Supervisor of School Guidance and Counseling in the Roselle public schools in New Jersey. She earned a Doctorate in Education from Rutgers University and a Master's from the Graduate School of Business, Central Michigan University. She has been a friend and supporter of our association since 2001 and is now chairing the UNA-NY Education Committee.

We also welcome back to the board Maureen Basquill-Ruf, Co-Chair of our Program Committee. Maureen has been a strong supporter of UNA-NY, both on and off the board, and we are glad to have the benefit of her experience.

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UNA-NY has arranged special subscription pricing for our members to **FOREIGN AFFAIRS**. Since 1922, the *Council on Foreign Relations* has published **FOREIGN AFFAIRS**, America's most influential publication on international affairs and foreign policy. It is more than a magazine — it is the international forum of choice for the most important new ideas, analysis, and debate on the most significant issues in the world. Inevitably, articles published in **FOREIGN AFFAIRS** shape the political dialogue for months and years to come.

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Through the work of the United Nations Association of New York and the over 175 community-based chapters around the country, UNA-USA creates a powerful national constituency for a United Nations that advances American interests in a global system. UNA offers each and every American the opportunity to connect with the critical issues confronted by the U.N. — from global health and human rights, to the spread of democracy, equitable sustainable development, and international justice. UNA educates Americans about the work of the United Nations, and builds public support for more effective U.S. engagement in the U.N.