

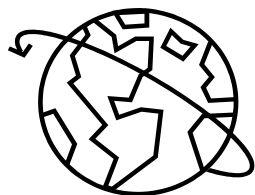
UNA-GKC NEWS

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Up Coming Events in Kansas City and Elsewhere

- January 21, UNA-GKC Board meeting, Brookside Room, UMKC, 5:30-7:00 p.m.
- February 18-21, Midwest Model UN conference, Hyatt Regency, downtown, St. Louis, Missouri.
- April 18-19, Tentative dates of a UNA-GKC regional conference, Kansas City.
- April 20-22, USDA-USAID Food Aid Conference, Kansas City.



Myths About the UN: Gillian Sorensen Discusses the Relevance of the UN in the 21st Century in Talk in Kansas City

By Zdravka Todorova

Gillian Sorensen, Assistant Secretary General of the United Nations for External Relations, addressed an audience of more than 200 people at the 33rd Annual Kansas City Mayor's United Nations Day Dinner on October 14. Her address dealt with the relevance and role of the UN in the 21st century and discussed what she called "myths" about the UN.

Her first challenge was directed toward the misconception that the UN deals only with peacekeeping. Sorensen pointed out that this duty only "represents about 20% of the UN's

agenda." She also indicated that peacekeeping is not only going on in Iraq, as some would believe. Sorensen reminded the audience that the UN is currently conducting 15 peacekeeping operations.

Another peacekeeping myth addressed was that United States soldiers are serving under foreign command when participating in UN peacekeeping operations. Sorensen remarked that American soldiers are a part of the UN forces while the operation lasts. She reminded the crowd that this is nothing new, and that operational control



under a foreign commander had been practiced in past wars, such as World War II.

According to Sorensen, it is not the case that US soldiers are carrying the burden of peacekeeping. She stated that the Canadian, the Dutch, the Pakistani, the British, the (continued on page 3) example, offer more

UMKC Model UN group goes to AMUN

Four members of the UMKC Model UN group participated in the American Model UN conference in Chicago this past November. The group included Julie Steinback, Purva Vaidya, Kabir Khanna, and Vasedeva Ramaswamy. They represented Afghanistan on

Disarmament and International Security Committee, the Economic and Financial Committee, the Social, Humanitarian and Cultural Committee and the Legal Committee. They also participated in the General Assembly Plenary Sessions.

At one point, the Security Council considered a resolu-

tion that called for the introduction of UN troops in Afghanistan expressly to protect workers giving humanitarian aid to the Afghan people.

According to the AMUN Daily Chronicle, a student-run paper published (continued on page 3)

WHAT'S HAPPENING AT THE UN

The UN should be part of a global strategy to fight terrorism.

UNESCO and other UN organizations are working for children worldwide.

"A comprehensive approach to HIV/AIDS must include prevention, treatment and cure."

Report of the Policy Working Group on the United Nations and Terrorism

The Policy Working Group considered that the United Nations should concentrate its direct role in counter-terrorism on the areas in which the Organization has a comparative advantage. In general terms, the United Nations should uphold, bolster and reassert the leading principles and purposes of the United Nations Charter, the core of which are undermined and threatened by terrorism. The Organization's activities should be part of a tripartite strategy supporting global efforts to:

- ***Dissuade** disaffected groups from embracing terrorism;
- ***Deny** groups or individuals the means to carry out acts of terrorism;
- *Sustain broad-based international **cooperation** in the

struggle against terrorism.

It should institute a periodic review of the existing treaty regime, and must underscore the linkages between instruments of international criminal law and counter-terrorism conventions. Full report is at <http://www.un.org/terrorism/a57273.doc>.

UNESCO's Early Childhood and Family Education

UNESCO's Early Childhood and Family Education section co-ordinates research, activities and initiatives undertaken by UNESCO in early childhood care and education, and parent and family education. With the help of its specialized services, its roster of consultants, its partnerships with United Nations agencies, major institutes and NGOs, UNESCO

- * provides various services to its Member States, United Nations agencies, foundations, organizations and individuals working in favour of children and families;

- * participates in United Nations or other international initiatives in favour of children and families, in the con-

text of the *Convention on the Rights of the Child*;

- *encourages governments to integrate early childhood and family education programmes in their long-term social and economic planning;

- *serves as a networking centre and clearing house for information on early childhood issues, policies, programmes and organizations. See more at www.unesco.org/education.

World Health Organization's and UNAIDS HIV/AIDS Plan

The World Health Organization (WHO) and UNAIDS on December 1, 2003, released a detailed and concrete plan to reach the 3 by 5 target of providing antiretroviral treatment to three million people living with AIDS in developing countries and those in transition by the end of 2005. This is a vital step towards the ultimate goal of providing universal access to AIDS treatment to all those who need it.

The strategy is a key element in a combined programme of accelerating HIV/AIDS prevention and

treatment. Much has already been done by countries, by UNAIDS, the World Bank, foundations, WHO and many other groups. After twenty years of fighting the epidemic, it is now clear that a comprehensive approach to HIV/AIDS must include prevention, treatment and care. See <http://www.who.int/mediacentre/>

Myths of the UN (continued from page 1)

Irish, the Bangladeshi, for example, offer more peacekeeping soldiers than the US.

Further, Gillian Sorensen addressed the concern that the UN performs as a form of world government. She stressed that this is "impossible, because UN has no financial resources, no endowment and trust funds, no power to tax or to borrow."

Sorensen also addressed other issues dealing directly with the UN and the US. One such issue is the perception that the UN is anti-American. She emphasized that the "opposite is true". According to Sorensen, the US is a recsets

ognized role model that sets standards worldwide. She claims there is a desire for American leadership in the UN.

Another point in Sorensen's speech was toward the perception that the UN is too costly to the US. The Assistant Secretary-General stated: "the costs for the US amount to a \$1.35 per person for a year", and called this cost "affordable." She reminded the audience that currently US is spending \$400 billion on defense for a year.

Sorensen went on to point out that the US has refused to sign "major international treaties countries of the world

which were signed by most countries of the world." These treaties include: The Conference on the Right of the Child; The Commission on Discrimination against Women; The Kyoto Treaty on Climate Change; The Law of the Sea; The Treaty on Land Mines and the International Criminal Court. Sorensen went on to call the US position with regard to international treaties one of "exceptionalism". She emphasized the importance of participation in such international treaties by the US, as well as other nations.

"The UN is the

"The UN is the mechanism by which nations have the opportunity to solve problems by agreement rather than by force," Sorensen said.

Sorensen called for recognition of the achievements of the UN not only in the area peacekeeping, but also in areas such as democratization and humanitarian relief. She called the UN an indispensable organization, providing a framework to nations for working on common issues.

"I do not know of any organization that has to do so much with so little resources", Gillian Sorensen said.

UMKC Model UN Group to AMUN (continued from p. 1)

lished during the conference, "one of the resolution's goals is to establish a balance of power in the region. Vasedeva Ramaswamy, Representative from Afghanistan, expressed concern for the dire state of affairs in which his country finds itself. He is wary, however, of a foreign military

presence, stressing that any forces from abroad must work in coalition with the Afghani military."

Kabir Khanna reported: "The conference was well attended with hundreds of delegates representing 97 countries. The specialty of this conference was the emphasis laid on professionalism, and on following the

rules set for the conference. This made the conference an extremely close simulation of the actual UN atmosphere – as stated by many, including some of the actual UN representatives that attended the conference.

For all of us at UMKC's Model UN organization, the experience

was one of a kind, offering truly international exposure to the world of diplomacy and negotiation – not far away from home! It is something that has helped us all understand, and appreciate the work put in by the leaders of this world, in making it a better place."

Contest Winners from Mayor's UN Dinner

For the Mayor's UN Day Dinner last October, there were several contests held for area middle and high school students. Here are the results:
For the **Visual Arts**: First

Place: Carey Richards, Olathe North HS, teacher/sponsor Deanna Trapp; Second Place: Ashley Mahoney, Shawnee Mission West HS, sponsor Greg Schieszer. For **Essays**:

First Place: Teonna Lee, Paseo Academy, sponsor Christopher Odam; Second Place: Sharnelle Guthrie, Paseo Academy, sponsor Christopher Odam; For **Poetry**: First Place: Ken-



isha Amos, Paseo Academy, sponsor Christopher Odam; Second Place: William Melton, Paseo Academy, sponsor Christopher Odam. Thanks to all of the schools, teachers and students that participated and congratulations to the winners.

**United Nations Association of the
United States of America
Greater Kansas City Chapter**

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**On This Day in
History**

- January 2, Kofi Annan became seventh UN Secretary-General, 1997.
- January 9, New UN Headquarters officially opened in New York City, 1952.
- January 23, UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) first meeting, London, 1946.
- January 30, World Court first met at The Hague, 1922.
- February 2, World Disarmament Conference convened, Geneva, 1932.
- February 10, First meeting of the UN Commission on the Status of Women, NY, 1947.
- February 16, UN Human Rights Commission established, 1946.
- February 21, First UN peacekeeping protection force goes to Yugoslavia, 1992.



UNA-GKC MEMBERSHIP FORM

If you would like to become a member of the UNA-USA, Greater Kansas City Chapter, please use the form below or register online at www.unausa.org. If you are already member, we thank you for your continued support.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Email : _____

Daytime Phone: _____ Bus Phone: _____

I am interested in a new membership

I am interested in renewing my existing membership

I am purchasing a gift membership

Chapter: Greater Kansas City Area Chapter

Membership: \$1000 Lifetime (one time dues payment)

\$ 500 Patron

\$ 100 Sponsor

\$ 40 Member

\$ 25 Introductory (First Year Only)

\$ 25 Senior

\$ 10 Student

Please make your check payable to UNA-USA and send it to:

UNA-USA, 801 Second Avenue, New York, NY 10017-4706