



# newsletter

of the Maine Chapter  
of the United Nations Association



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11 Columbia Street, Augusta, ME 04330

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## UNITED NATIONS DAY — 2002

The Board has accepted a proposal by Thesil Morlan to use the occasion of UN Day this year to sponsor a symposium about the International Criminal Court, in collaboration with various interested groups in Maine.

To become effective, the treaty establishing the Court must be ratified by at least 60 UN member states, a total which is likely to be reached well before UN Day (October 24th). The United States has indicated that it will not ratify the statute and there is evidence that the conservatives in the US Congress will do what they can to sabotage the Court. The reason most often given for opposition to the statute is that the Court could conceivably try American servicemen on duty overseas who are accused of war crimes.

There is a widely-held opinion amongst experts in international law that safeguards established within the statute would effectively prevent this from happening. The issue goes to the heart of the nature and purpose of the United Nations - to secure the rule of law in the world, in the interests of collective security. It is therefore appropriate and timely for the Chapter to sponsor an intensive public examination of the ICC statute and the objections that have been raised to it. Chapter members will be informed when arrangements for the UN Day observation have been completed.

## BRUNSWICK, MAINE AND TRINIDAD, CUBA

A couple of years ago, a group in Brunswick ME launched a campaign to establish a sister city relationship with Trinidad, Cuba. They required the approval of the Brunswick City Council, and asked UNA-Maine to endorse the idea, to strengthen their case with the City Council, which we did. The Council approved the sister city relationship, which is now up and running.

Interested citizens of the midcoast region have made several visits to Trinidad to strengthen the ties, among them Board member Trudi Schneider and her husband, Jack. The Schneiders took with them a collection of school supplies to deliver to schools in Trinidad, which our Chapter helped to finance. A very nice thank-you note from Trinidad was read to the Board at its last meeting.

## MODEL UN - 2002

Plans for the Model UN 2002 are going well. To date, 13 schools and 200 students are expected to participate in the event, which is scheduled for May 14-16 on the USM Gorham campus. The Model UN will again be conducted under the leadership of Professor Lynn Kuzma, a Chapter Board member.

Topics scheduled for debate in MUN 2002 (revised from the tentative list published earlier) are timely:

The Security Council:	India/Pakistan confrontation ; Arab/Israeli conflict
Human Rights Commission:	Capital Punishment; Racism against indigenous peoples
General Assembly 6th (Legal Committee):	Extradition; Patent law (intellectual property)
Special Session of the General Assembly:	Children and armed conflict
	Sale of children, child prostitution and pornography

[It happens that the actual UN General Assembly Special Session will coincide with the MUN 2002 sessions]

The Chapter still has some ways to go in raising the amount required to fulfill our commitment toward the cost of Model UN 2002. All members should have received a letter dated February 12th from Bob Howe, Chapter President, inviting contributions to support Model UN 2002. We remind members who have not yet done so to send their contributions to Bob Howe, President UNA-Maine, 11 Columbia Street, Augusta ME 04330, without delay.

Members wishing to receive the latest information about MUN 2002 may consult its web-site: <http://www.usm.maine.edu/~kuzma/mun>.

## POINTS OF REFERENCE

An excellent source of information about activities of the United Nations and its Specialized Agencies is UN WIRE, an independent news briefing about the UN, sponsored by the United Nations Foundation. It may be found on the web at <http://www.unfoundation.org/unwire/current>.

The United Nations Publications Office is an excellent source of publications of relevance to the United Nations, including publications of the United Nations University Press, whose catalogue for 2001-2002 lists 93 publications of "scholarly books generally related to the University's research program." More information may be found at <http://www.un.org>

## NEW BOARD MEMBERS WELCOMED

The Board welcomed three new members at its March 15th meeting: Jack Swift of Georgetown and Julia Edwards and Paula Brayson.

Jack Swift, a member of the Chapter for some years, is a retired engineer with more than 50 years of private sector experience as an engineer and manager in more than 20 countries in Europe, Asia, Latin and North America, including consulting for the World Bank and FAO. Since retirement Jack has been active in civic affairs in Georgetown and Sagadahoc County.

Julia Edwards, a junior, and Paula Brayson, a senior, are international studies majors at the University of Southern Maine, under the guidance of Professor Lynn Kuzma.

## 190th MEMBER STATE

On Sunday, March 4th 2002, Swiss voters narrowly approved a referendum on UN membership for their stringently neutral country, with 54.6 percent of voters and 12 of 23 cantons casting ballots in favor of accession to the world body, according to UN Wire.

The decision reverses the result of a 1986 referendum in which a proposed UN membership was soundly defeated. Following 47 years of observer status, Switzerland could become the 190th member country at the General Assembly's next session later this year.

Before then, the country must formally notify UN Secretary General Kofi Annan, of its intention to join, and its bid must be approved by nine Security Council members, with no veto, and ratified by two-thirds of the members of the General Assembly.

The Swiss vote followed a campaign in which mainly rightist opponents charged that UN membership would threaten Switzerland's traditional neutrality. The opposition was focussed mainly in German-speaking eastern Switzerland. French-speaking westerners were solidly in favor of UN membership. "I did not lose; Switzerland did," said Christoph Blocher, the far-right billionaire who spearheaded the anti-accession campaign.

Secretary-General Annan welcomed the referendum's results, calling Switzerland "a vivid example of what the United Nations stands for: a tolerant, peaceful and multicultural society built on democratic values."

It has been reported that UN membership will cost Switzerland \$14.1 million in dues, plus \$32 million for peacekeeping operations and \$2 million for UN tribunals. The Swiss ambassador to the UN called the cost "negligible" when seen in the context of what Switzerland will gain, "including the right to defend our interests directly, rather than depending on the good will of others.

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## "TURN IN YOUR FRIENDS"

The tragic events of 9/11 have made the relevance of the United Nations to the elimination of terrorism and other causes of international distress and the maintenance of international peace abundantly clear. Maine citizens need to learn more about the work of the organization and to spread the word to their friends and neighbors. The United Nations Association of Maine exists for that purpose. We encourage all members of our Chapter to recruit new members toward this end. Membership application forms may be obtained from President Bob Howe's office, at 11 Columbia Street, Augusta ME 04330.

## AWARD FOR THESIL MORLAN

We are proud to announce that UNA Board Member Thesil Morlan was the recipient of the World Federalist Association "Presidential Award," presented to her by Association President John Anderson at their annual meeting in March, in Washington, D.C.

President Anderson's letter to Thesil announcing the award read in part: "From your leadership of the Gender Equity Commission and the Maine Chapter, service on our national Board of Directors and Executive Committee, editorship of the 'Minerva' collation and the Maine Chapter newsletter....it's nearly impossible to find an aspect of our organization that hasn't benefited from your quiet, thoughtful and dedicated contributions....You provide a mode of selfless service in our cause. And I hope you know that your exemplary acts of leadership are an inspiration to many. As WFA's President, I want to thank you for all you have done and continue to do on behalf of world federalism. Congratulations!"

UNA-Maine's President Bob Howe announced his pleasure at this award and adds his congratulations and those of our members, for Thesil Morlan.

