



newsletter

of the Maine Chapter
of the United Nations Association
www.unamaine.org



Autumn 2004, Vol. XIII, No.3

11 Columbia Street, Augusta, ME 04330

OFFICERS

President

Wendy Hazard, Belgrade
495-2675

Vice President

Bruce Stedman, Westport
882-7387

Secretary

Lydia Sparrow, Brunswick
725-5477r

Treasurer

Robert S. Howe, Harpswell,
622-4466

DIRECTORS

Anne Brautigam, Brunswick
725-4483

Isabel Denham, Yarmouth
846-5931

Julia Edwards, So. Portland
799-5827

Tom Ewell, Portland
772-1918

Suzanne Hedrick, Nobleboro
563-7041

Lynn Kuzma, Portland
(O) 780-4347
(H) 773-7353

Thesil Morlan, Waldoboro
832-6863

Al Niese, Woolwich, 443-8613

David Pearson, Kents Hill
685-3749

Kenneth Rodman, Colby
College, Waterville

Mary Lee Rushmore,
New Harbor, 677-3647

Vanessa Saric, South Port-
land, 409-2552

Trudi Schneider,
Georgetown, 371-2152

Herschel Sternlieb,
Brunswick, 725-2888

Philip Thompson, Portland
871-7171

Sarah Walton, Augusta
622-1993

UNITED NATIONS DAY 2004

The Board of Directors has decided to commemorate the 59th anniversary of the UN's birth on Sunday, October 24th, by co-sponsoring a presentation entitled

Environmental Justice—The Niger Delta Experience

The speaker will be a distinguished Nigerian lawyer and advocate for environmental justice, Mr. Innih Archibong.

Mr. Archibong is currently a visiting scholar at the Center for the Study of Human Rights at Columbia University. He is Executive Director of *Liberty Now*, an organization dedicated to paralegal and civic training in the troubled Niger Delta region of Nigeria. Mr. Archibong is involved in litigation seeking to obtain compensation for communities affected by oil and gas pollution in that region. He was recently elected to the National Legal Committee of the Citizens Forum for Constitutional Reform, a coalition of some 117 civil society organizations concerned with constitutional reform in Nigeria. It is Mr. Archibong's ambition, on his return to Nigeria, to change the way the government and the multinational oil companies interact in the Niger delta to protect the environment and the livelihood of the local community.

Host of the program, and co-sponsor, will be the International Law Society of the Maine Law School and its Black Law Students Association and the Environmental Law Society. Local chapters of Amnesty International and Citizens for Global Solutions will also co-sponsor the event, which will convene at the Law School on the USM campus at 2:00 PM on Sunday, October 24th.

The public is invited. Members are encouraged to attend what promises to be a topical and lively discussion. Please come and bring your friends.

Nethercutt Amendment

The Nethercutt Amendment (named for its sponsor, the junior Senator from Washington State) to the Foreign Operations Appropria-

tions bill was first introduced in the House of Representatives and passed in July. It would deny funds from the State Department's Economic Support Fund "to provide assistance to the government of a country that is a party to the International Criminal Court (ICC) and has not entered into any agreement with the United States...preventing the ICC from proceeding against personnel present in such a country." The amendment is another attempt by the administration and certain members of the Congress to weaken the ICC through further intimidation of ICC member states, by threatening to cut U.S. economic assistance to them if they do not agree to exempt US citizens from prosecution for crimes against humanity.

Representatives of the Maine Alliance for the International Criminal Court (MAICC) met with the staff of Maine Senator Susan Collins in early September to request her opposition to the Nethercutt amendment when it comes up for a vote in the Senate. UNA Maine is a member of the MAICC, and was represented in the visit to Senator Collins' office by Wendy Hazard, chapter president, and Sarah Walton, Board member and representative of the Maine League of Women Voters. Arrangements are also being made to meet with Senator Snowe's staff on the same subject.

UNICEF Christmas Cards

The Chapter has undertaken to assist UNICEF through the sale of their popular Christmas cards beginning with the Common Ground Fair where we shall have a booth. Members wishing to purchase UNICEF cards and support the organization in that way should contact Wendy Hazard at 495-2675.

CONA

Members may not all be familiar with a Damariscotta-based non-governmental organization called CONA, which was originally an acronym for "Citizens Opposed to Nuclear Armaments" and is now called "Citizens Offering New Alternatives." CONA is an important institution to UNA-Maine for many reasons. In the first place, CONA is the parent of our chapter. During Thomas Quinby's reign as head of CONA, he undertook a project to establish a chapter of the United Nations Association-USA in Maine, and ultimately became our first chapter president. A second reason is that CONA and UNA-Maine share many of the same goals; CONA is a strong supporter of the United Nations Charter.

With that background, we are pleased to report that

Wendy Hazard and Bruce Stedman participated in a forum on democracy sponsored by CONA on September 15th in the Skidompha library in Damariscotta. Tom "Mac" Deford of Rockland was the third panel member. It was a standing-room only crowd and the event was judged to have been a success. Members of the UNA-Maine Board feel that our chapter should explore opportunities to collaborate with NGOs in Maine who share our goals and interests including, in particular, CONA.

E-Mail Addresses

Chapter members who have access to e-mail are invited to inform Wendy Hazard, chapter president, of their e-mail addresses, which would facilitate our communications. The information should be sent to Wendy by e-mail at whazard@gwi.net

News Bites from the UN Wire

Continuing the practice followed in recent editions of the Newsletter, we publish here excerpts from the UN Wire's daily news bulletins, thought to be of general interest and not widely publicized elsewhere. UN Wire is sponsored by the United Nations Foundation; it has no official connection with the United Nations. UN Wire bulletins are available on the internet at www.unwire.org/subscribe.

06/28/04 US Government health experts must now be given permission by senior Bush administration officials, and must agree to advocate certain US government policies, before they can lend their expertise as consultants to the World Health Organization (WHO), the Associated Press reported. William Steiger, Head of the Office of Global Health Affairs, announced in April that WHO will no longer be able to pick experts to serve as consultants. Steiger's office will now choose the "appropriate expert who can best serve both our organizations."

07/02/04 The UN General Assembly yesterday unanimously adopted a resolution that expands the participation of the Holy See in its work, the United Nations announced. The resolution allows the Holy See's delegates the right to reply to speeches made during Assembly debates as well as the right to participate in the general debate, which takes place annually in September.

07/06/04 The United States has decided to withdraw nine military personnel from two UN peace-keeping missions because the soldiers are no longer shielded from prosecution for war crimes after a UN resolution expired Wednesday, a Pentagon spokesman said Thursday. A seven-member US team helping to monitor peace between Eritrea and Ethiopia will be recalled, along with two liaison officers from the UN Interim Administrative Mission in Kosovo.

08/23/04 UN Deputy Secretary-General, Louise Frechette of Canada, was named to Forbes Magazine's list of the world's most powerful women, ranked just behind AIDs researcher, Dr. Mathilde Krim.

08/30/04 Japan's Prime Minister announced that he would press for a permanent seat on the Security Council for Japan when he addresses the General Assembly in September. Japan is the second largest contributor to the UN. Japan faces competition in its quest for a permanent seat on the Council from a number of other nations, including India, Germany and Brazil.

08/30/04 Salim Lone, a former UN official, claimed that the UN's legitimacy has eroded over time, especially in the Muslim world, following the September terrorist attacks. He said that member states and the Secretary-General should see the eroding legitimacy as the greatest challenge the organization faces. Lone was a staff member in the Baghdad office when the office was destroyed by a terrorist bomb on August 19, 2003. The bomb killed 22 UN employees, including the Secretary-General's personal representative in Baghdad, Sergio Vieira de Mello.

08/30/04 Few diplomats and even fewer architectural critics are mourning the impending demise of the boxy, modernist, Manhattan building that houses the US Mission to the United Nations. The government will be building a taller and more secure building on the same site.

09/01/04 In an unprecedented ban on UN officials' freedom to travel, Under Secretary-General Peter Hansen, who is in charge of UN assistance to Palestinian refugees (UNRWA) was barred by Israeli authorities from leaving Gaza to travel to the West Bank.

09/09/04 David Setter, author of Darkness at Dawn—the Rise of the Russian Criminal State, argues that Russian President Vladimir Putin's position on Chechnya is a "form of moral suicide" that will "destroy what is left of Russian democracy and

could threaten the whole world."

09/10/04 Despite the threat of opposition from the United States, Mohammed El Baradei is expected to announce his intention to seek a third four-year term as Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency. El Baradei has headed IAEA since December, 1997.

09/11/04 Under-Secretary of State in charge of non-proliferation, John R. Bolton, argues that "co-operative action with other sovereign states to deny rogue nations and terrorists access to the materials and know-how needed to develop UMDs, is preferable to entrusting security to "treaty-based bureaucracies."

09/16/04 The policy section of the Arctic Climate Impact Assessment Report, which has been four years in the making, is being blocked from release by the Bush administration. The report is supposed to be released at a meeting of eight Arctic nations in November in Reykjavik, Iceland. The other nations that commissioned the study—Canada, Russia, Norway, Finland, Denmark, Sweden and Iceland, all want the policy section released.

09/16/04 In an interview with the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC), UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan said that the US-led invasion of Iraq was "not in conformity with the Security Council or with the UN Charter." Officials from the US, Britain and Australia were highly critical of Annan's remarks, suggesting that the Secretary General had exceeded his mandate and was trying to influence the upcoming elections in Australia and the United States.

09/21/04 Former Secretary of Defense, Caspar Weinberger, surmising a Kerry administration would "turn over to the United Nations any politically difficult foreign policy decisions," assailed Secretary-General Annan's recent remarks about the legality of the US invasion of Iraq. Writing in the Wall Street Journal, Weinberger said: "Put another way, if Kofi Annan had a vote on November 2nd, which way would he vote? Now, ask yourself the simple follow-up question: 'Which way should I vote?'"

09/21/04 Iran's increasingly strident position over its domestic nuclear program is causing a rift in the administration of US President George W. Bush, according to the New York Times, with Secretary of State Colin Powell emerging as the chief advocate of an international, negotiated response and John R. Bolton, Under-Secretary for non-proliferation, adopting a more confrontational position.

To Contact Your Congressional Legislators

Senator Susan Collins

172 Russell Senate Office Bldg.
Washington, D.C. 20510
Tel: 202 224-2523
Fax: 202 224-2693
e-mail: senator@collins.senate.gov
Local Office
11 Lisbon St. Lewiston 04240
784-6969

Senator Olympia Snowe

154 Russell Senate Office Bldg
Washington, D.C. 20510
Tel: 202 224-5344
Fax: 202 224-1946
e-mail: olympia@snowe.senate.gov
Local Office
2 Great Falls Place, Auburn 04210
786-2451

Representative Tom Allen

1717 Longworth House Bldg
Washington, D.C. 20515
Tel: 202 225-6116
Fax: 202-225-5590
Local Office
234 Oxford St. Portland 04101
Tel: 774-5019
Fax: 871-0770
e-mail: rep.tomallen@mail.house.gov

Representative Michael Michaud

437 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515
Tel: 202 225-6306
Fax: 202 225-2943
e-mail: rep.mikemichaud@mail.house.gov
Local Office
179 Lisbon St., Lewiston 04240,
782-3704