

# UNA Westchester Global Connection



**United Nations Association of the USA (UNA-USA) Westchester Chapter**

<http://www.unawestchester.org>

February 2008

United Nations Association of the USA (UNA-USA) Westchester Chapter  
and the Greenburgh Nature Center are pleased to present

## *Climate Change: Too Hot to Handle? What is it? What causes it? What can we do about it?*

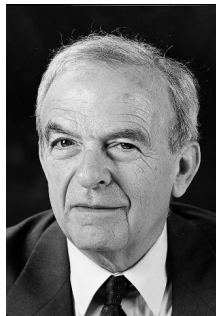
Saturday, March 15, 2008

4:00–6:00 P.M.

Greenburgh Nature Center Manor House

A reception with refreshments will follow the program.

The program features Dr. Richard Ottinger, Dean Emeritus and Professor of Law at Pace University Law School. Dr. Ottinger served 16 years as our Representative in Congress, where he chaired the House Subcommittee on Energy, Conservation, and Power. His presentation will be followed by brief commentaries by local industry and environment representatives and questions and comments from the floor. The event is cosponsored by the Sierra Club and the African American Men of Westchester.



Through the UN's Kyoto Protocol and subsequent agreements, the world community is making an effort to limit greenhouse gas emissions. Will the United States be a part of this process, or is the issue simply "Too Hot to Handle?"

The Center is located on Dromore Road, off Central Avenue, Scarsdale, NY. Going north, Dromore Road is on the right, past Burger King and across from 455 Scarsdale Plaza.

For further information contact Ms. Doris Benson [dwbenson@us.ibm.com](mailto:dwbenson@us.ibm.com), 914-961-6554 or see [www.UNAWestchester.org](http://www.UNAWestchester.org) or [www.greenburghnaturecenter.org](http://www.greenburghnaturecenter.org).

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## ***UNA Westchester President's Letter***

As we begin the new year, we are pleased to present a new member of our Board of Directors: David Cheney. David, who lives in Dobbs Ferry, had a long and successful career at the International Monetary Fund in Washington, where he retired as Chief of the IMF's Editorial Division. He is a writer, editor, trainer, and project manager for economic and financial institutions in the public and private sectors. He is looking forward to working actively with our Advocacy Committee. Welcome David!



No one who has survived Super Tuesday can be unaware that we are in the midst of a very significant presidential election year. While the UN Association of Westchester is apolitical in the sense that it does not endorse candidates, in this issue we are providing links to sites that track the candidates' positions on the United Nations and other international issues.

The recognition of Al Gore and the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) as recipients of the Nobel Peace Prize has raised the issue of global warming to the top of many political agendas. In this issue, Scott Monje demystifies the IPCC and provides useful clarifications. Our March 15 event ("Climate Change: Too Hot to Handle?") brings us into partnership with the Greenburgh Nature Center and its 1,200 members. We hope you will all attend this event—and enjoy the beautiful Manor House and grounds while you are there.

This issue also provides opportunities for you to volunteer for the Yonkers 3rd grade project and other activities. Thanks to

Ginger Stillman, we have virtual access to almost all of the 30-minute programs in the video series *Going Global with the UN* at [www.ric.dcccd.edu/modelun/videos](http://www.ric.dcccd.edu/modelun/videos). I urge every member of our Association to watch the videos of interest to them and to share the website with others. In this way each of you can become an "active" member. In between issues of the *Global Connection*, you can keep track of our Chapter activities at our website [www.unawestchester.org](http://www.unawestchester.org) which is further described in this issue by Webmaster Sarah Angel.

*Phil Reynolds*  
President, UNA Westchester

## ***A Nobel Prize for Peace: The IPCC<sup>1</sup>***

The Norwegian Nobel Committee granted its annual Peace Prize to two recipients in 2007, Al Gore and the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC). They were honored "for their efforts to build up and disseminate greater knowledge about man-made climate change, and to lay the foundations for the measures that are needed to counteract such change." We all remember Al Gore, but what is this IPCC?

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change was formed in 1988 by the United Nations Environment Programme and the World Meteorological Organization and is open to all members of those organizations. The IPCC does not conduct research or monitor climate data itself. Its job is to review all the research published

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<sup>1</sup> Those seeking further information can take a look at the IPCC website, <<http://www.ipcc.ch>>. Other sources include *Framework for a Post-2012 Agreement of Climate Change* (Washington: United Nations Foundation, 2007); Joshua W. Busby, *Climate Change and National Security: An Agenda for Action* (New York: Council on Foreign Relations Press, 2007); and Spencer R. Weart, *The Discovery of Global Warming* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2003).

in peer-reviewed scientific and technical journals and come to a consensus as to what it means. To do this, it brings together thousands of climate experts from around the world. They form working groups dedicated to different aspects of the overall problem. Major decisions are made in plenary sessions, with all members participating. The IPCC does not make or recommend specific policies.

The reports of the IPCC are written by the experts; governments may then review and comment on them before they are published. Comprehensive assessments have been issued in 1990, 1995, 2001, and 2007. These reports have become standard references regarding the scientific understanding of climate change. As the Nobel Committee notes: “Through the scientific reports it has issued over the past two decades, the IPCC has created an ever-broader informed consensus about the connection between human activities and global warming.... In the last few years, the connections have become even clearer and the consequences still more apparent.”

The first chairman of the IPCC was Bert Bolin (1988–1997), a meteorologist from the University of Stockholm. A pioneer in the study of the carbon cycle, Bolin began talking about the warming trends induced by greenhouse gases as early as the 1950s. He lived long enough to see his panel awarded the Nobel Prize but then passed away on Dec. 30, 2007. The second chairman was Robert T. Watson (1997–2002), a British-born U.S. chemist who specialized in the study of atmospheric pollution.

Rajendra K. Pachauri, who has held the position of chair since 2002, is also the director-general of an energy research institute in India. Pachauri holds doctoral degrees in both engineering and economics, and his nomination was supported by the Bush administration.

-- Continued on page 6

## ***UNA-USA's Advocacy on Climate Change***

Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon has made climate change the top priority of his administration, and last year's Nobel Peace Prize to the IPCC brought further attention to the issue. Ban oversaw the IPCC's compelling 2007 report, and he inspected the ice shelves breaking into the Antarctic and the Amazon rain forest during the year. He reported his findings to a meeting of the IPCC in Valencia, Spain, in November.<sup>2</sup>

Ban explains that the UN needs the United States to play a lead role on tackling global warming and other environmental threats if any international efforts are to succeed. The UNA-USA has thus included the following as one of the four items on its national advocacy agenda for 2008:

### **Advocacy Agenda:**

#### **Constructive U.S. Participation in the UN Climate Change Framework**

The threat of climate change is the type of issue that the UN is best suited to address—a truly global challenge that no region can ignore and no nation can resolve on its own. Over the past 20 years, the UN has taken the lead in pushing for action on climate change through developing the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), which has been signed by 192 countries, including the United States. UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon has called for urgent and inclusive negotiations under the UNFCCC to draft a comprehensive successor agreement to the Kyoto Protocol by 2009. As the world's largest economy and a leading emitter of greenhouse gases, the United States has a responsibility to

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<sup>2</sup> See the related article by Barbara Crossette, “Antarctica to Bali: Ban Becomes the Environmental Secretary-General,” *The InterDependent*, 5:4 (Winter 2007/08): 10-11.

participate actively and constructively in these UN-led negotiations.

*Goal: Promote understanding and awareness of the UN's role in international climate change negotiations. Encourage U.S. participation and leadership in the UN-led effort to negotiate a new UN climate treaty.*

*Action Items:*

- *Establish regular contact with Members of Congress to inform them of the UN's valuable work on climate change;*
- *Encourage the Administration to participate in UN climate change negotiations in 2008;*
- *Educate your community through outreach and media about the UN's invaluable role in addressing the shared effects of climate change; and*
- *Work with local government, particularly city mayors, to support UN recommendations on climate change.*

For UNA-USA's full advocacy agenda, visit [www.unausa.org/advocacyagenda2008](http://www.unausa.org/advocacyagenda2008).

***UN Original:  
Molly Bruce and her Lifetime  
Dedicated to Human Rights<sup>3</sup>***

Margaret Bruce, a longtime UNA-USA member, has experienced the development of the United Nations like few others. From attending the first UN General Assembly to working with Eleanor Roosevelt on the Universal Declaration of



<sup>3</sup> The full article by Paul Collett was printed in *The InterDependent*, 5:3 (Fall 2007). Molly Bruce currently serves as Advocacy Chair for both the Westchester Chapter and the Southern New York State Division of UNA-USA.

Human Rights, Molly, as she is known, has spent much of her life in service to the world body.

She won a staff job with the 18-member Human Rights Commission, chaired by former First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt, as it drafted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. She helped frame the debate and befriended the key actors. She notes that, until the Universal Declaration was adopted in 1948, there had been no universal definition of human rights on the international level. The Declaration protected both men and women, which was also a breakthrough.

During her 32 years in the UN Secretariat, Molly helped lead revolutionary changes in international politics. For her, the UN's greatest achievement was "emergence from colonialism." She points to the role of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in declarations of independence as new nations were created in Asia and Africa.

In 1962, Molly took charge of the UN's program for the advancement of women, and visited many nations that were pioneering or catching up in the worldwide push for women's rights, including emerging countries of Africa and Asia. In the next two decades, she helped spearhead sweeping changes in the Commission on the Status of Women and was a key participant in the first World Conference of Women in Mexico City.

Following those exciting decades, Molly retired from the Secretariat in 1977 and was awarded the Order of the British Empire (OBE) for life-long service. Since those days she has used her energy to support the UN's influence by serving eight years on the UNA-USA national board of governors. She also served as president of the UNA's Southern New York State Division and of the Westchester Chapter and remains on the boards of both bodies.

***Lehman College Homecoming  
Program for the United Nations,  
May 21, 2008***

Lehman College was the first home of the United Nations in the USA, serving as the UN's headquarters from March to August 1946, before it was moved to Lake Success. Its beautiful campus in the Bronx has been enhanced by a Peace Grove of dogwood trees, planted in honor of the UN's 50th Anniversary in 1995. Lehman will hold a "Homecoming" for the United Nations on May 21, 2008, featuring a symposium on "The United Nations: Past, Present, and Future" from 1:00 to 3:00 P.M., a rededication of the Peace Grove, an exhibition, and a reception. Members of UNA-Westchester are invited—and encouraged—to attend.

*Honorary Degree for Molly Bruce*  
Lehman College will also confer an Honorary Degree of Humane Letters to Molly Bruce at its Commencement on May 29, 2008.

***Also Coming Up: May 4th at  
Scarsdale Library, Linda Fasulo***

Linda Fasulo, NPR/NBC UN Correspondent speaks at our annual meeting on her book *An Insider's Guide to the UN*. Scarsdale Public Library, 50 Olmstead Avenue, Scarsdale, 2:00 to 4:00 P.M. Don't miss it!

***UN Video Series Available Online***

Ginger Stillman, who supervised the preparation and distribution of the first 52 episodes of the video series *Going Global with the UN*, has informed us that Richland College, a community college in Dallas County, Texas, has placed all 52 videos

online. The series is accessible at [www.rlc.dcccd.edu/modelun/videos.htm](http://www.rlc.dcccd.edu/modelun/videos.htm).

Within the *Going Global* series, information on the Universal Declaration of Human Rights can be found in episode No. 3 at: [http://video.dcccd.edu/Model\\_UN/UN\\_Prgm03.wmv](http://video.dcccd.edu/Model_UN/UN_Prgm03.wmv). This video also contains a clip about Molly Bruce and her work.

***Link to UNA Westchester!***

UNA Westchester is live online at <http://www.unawestchester.org>. On the website, you will find information about upcoming events, newsletters, board members, membership, and more. The website can be viewed by the general public, but if you are a member, you can also log in for additional features such as updating your member profile. To log in the first time:

- (1) Go to <http://www.unawestchester.org>.
- (2) Click on "LOGIN" at the top right.
- (3) Click on "Forgot your password?"
- (4) Enter your last name and your email.
- (5) Click "Get Login Info."

You should receive an email with your login information. For security purposes, your last name and email must match what is on record with UNA Westchester. If you are unable to obtain your login information, contact Sarah Angel at [sta9@cornell.edu](mailto:sta9@cornell.edu). After you have received your login information, you can change your password and update your member profile by going to <http://www.unawestchester.org> and logging in with your login name and password. Just click on "Admin" on the top menu bar and follow the instructions.

We hope that you enjoy our new website. If you have any questions or ideas for future content, contact webmaster Sarah Angel at [sta9@cornell.edu](mailto:sta9@cornell.edu).

### ***Presidential Candidates' Views on International Issues and the UN***

Detailed information on where the candidates stand regarding the environment, energy, and other international issues can be found on <http://glassbooth.org/explore/>. Also please visit <http://www.unausa.org> to see candidates' responses to the UNA-USA questionnaire asking their views on global issues. Other websites that provide information on the candidates' positions regarding international issues are: <http://globalsolutions.org/> and <http://www.ondayone.org>.

### ***In Case You Missed It . . . What Good Is the United Nations?***

This was the question posed in a program presented by the UNA-USA, Westchester Chapter, on December 9 at the Bronxville Public Library. Responses to the question were presented by a number of the Chapter's Board members, included both well-known contributions by the world organization and its agencies—peaceful settlement of disputes, for instance—and little-known ones such as the monitoring of air traffic and setting of safety standards by the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO). Selected from among the many other ways the UN makes a difference, members spoke of: promoting women's rights and well-being; fighting diseases and epidemics; aiding refugees; promoting the rights of persons with disabilities; improving agriculture; and providing emergency food aid to the neediest of the world.

The audience of over 100 also enjoyed music by the Youth Philharmonic for the UN, with pieces by Barber, Beethoven, and Bartok. The director, George Mathew, drew an analogy between the efforts required by musicians to perform a harmonious piece of music and the cooperation required to

achieve global peace. The afternoon was an informative tribute to the United Nations.

### ***A Great Opportunity for Volunteers!***

This is a good time to sign up to be part of the fourth annual project, "Peace Makes the World a Better Place," taking place this spring in third grades in the Yonkers public schools. Descriptions of the project and its success have appeared in past issues of this Newsletter. Volunteers from previous years, who range in age from 16 to 86, are looking forward to repeating an enjoyable experience, spending an hour or so talking with children about the United Nations and about peace, and getting enthusiastic responses from students in the form of original drawings.

The more volunteers we have, the more students we can reach! UNA members and other interested friends are welcome. Volunteers visit classes in teams of two, with visual and written materials provided. After the first class, most of us are "hooked." There are other ways to help, however, such as organizing and managing materials or hanging displays of the art work. Whatever your preference, you are needed! Please contact the coordinator, Karen Rockwell El-Badry, at [rockwell550@aol.com](mailto:rockwell550@aol.com), or call her at 693-5038 for more information.

### ***-- Continued from page 3***

The IPCC's first assessment, released in August 1990, prompted the drafting of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). That document was an important outcome of the UN Conference on Environment and Development (the "Earth Summit") in Rio de Janeiro in 1992 and was signed and ratified by 192 countries, including the United States. The second assessment, in 1995, led two years later to the Kyoto Protocol, a follow-up to the UNFCCC that called on industrialized

countries to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by the year 2012 to a level 5% below that of 1990. Although the US signed the Protocol, the document has never been submitted to the Senate for ratification. Some people objected to the Protocol's call for mandatory limits, which they believed would interfere with economic progress, and some objected to the fact that the agreement did not place restrictions on fast-growing (and heavily polluting) developing countries, such as China and India.

As an alternative to the UN-based process, in 2005 the US, together with Australia, China, India, Japan, and the Republic of Korea founded the Asia-Pacific Partnership on Clean Development and Climate, which promoted voluntary targets. By that time, US emissions had risen 16% above 1990 levels. The European Union, collectively, is currently on track to reduce its emissions by 8% by 2012, although the performance of individual member-states has varied.

The IPCC's fourth assessment, in 2007, removed virtually all doubt that human activity was contributing to global warming. As a consequence, in December 2007, representatives from 187 countries meeting in Bali, Indonesia, agreed to negotiate a new

climate accord to succeed the Kyoto Protocol over the next two years. The framework agreement reached in Bali did not endorse specific goals as some countries had hoped—but neither did it exclude them from the accord to be negotiated. To assure the participation of the United States, the talks will proceed on two tracks: one for countries that have agreed to mandatory limits and one for those favoring voluntary targets. The new accord is to include some mandatory goals for developing countries and ease the transfer of “green” technologies to developing countries.

So what does all this have to do with peace? The concern is that rising temperatures may create conditions for increased conflict. In the words of the Nobel Committee: “Extensive climate changes may alter and threaten the living conditions of much of mankind. They may induce large-scale migration and lead to greater competition for the earth's resources. Such changes will place particularly heavy burdens on the world's most vulnerable countries. There may be increased danger of violent conflicts and wars, within and between states.”

*Scott C. Monje*

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***MAKE YOUR VOICE HEARD! Join UNA-USA Westchester Today!***

Please enroll me as a member of UNA-USA as follows (please circle one):

- Lifetime (one-time dues payment)      \$1,000
- Patron      \$ 500
- Sponsor      \$ 100
- Member      \$ 40
- Introductory (first year only)      \$ 25
- Student      \$ 10

In addition to my membership dues, I would like to contribute to:

- Westchester Chapter      \$ \_\_\_\_\_
- National Office      \$ \_\_\_\_\_
- Total enclosed      \$ \_\_\_\_\_
- My company matches employee contributions. (My company's matching form is attached.)
- Please send me information on making a Planned Gift

Areas of interest (circle): Program, Advocacy, Education, Membership, Newsletter

Name \_\_\_\_\_ (Please print)

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

Tel: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Please return this, along with your check payable to UNA-USA, to:

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