

UNA-SA President's Review- 30 September 2006

Dear members of the Executive Committee and Chapters

At the end of April 2006 I presented my mid-year review to you. I now wish to add to that by stating where I think our UNA stands as we head for the AGM on 7 October 2006, to be held at the University of the Western Cape.

I would like to firstly ask the UWC Chapter to prepare an enlarged laminated copy of one 2005 ARMUN General Assembly Final Resolution to be displayed in our UNA-SA Office at UWC. This resolution was formerly passed on to the UN through WFUNA as an African effort to add to the UN debates on world and African affairs and to show how our civil society UNA structure wish to express ourselves through a MUN initiative.

My earlier report in April mentioned a number of initiatives we were embarking on. The Three Continents Film Festival continues as a successful annual activity through the efforts of Karen Smith and the Chapters. We have had extra DVDs made at Stellenbosch University to facilitate a wider spread of the films. The publication of the book on the MDG Competition papers is yet to be completed as we negotiate with UNDP about the funding of the costs of the book.

A Model United Nations conference was planned for Rhodes University in September, but we decided for various reasons not to have it, but set March/April 2007 as a target date. All Chapters are welcome to bid for this event for next year.

We requested that each Chapter consider developing an MDG-related follow-up community project after our successful competition of 2005. I wish to challenge the Chapters to respond and for the new Executive Committee to consider an appropriate award for the best project, to be adjudicated appropriately by our structures.

I wish to again appeal to Chapters to continue to grow and expand beyond universities to civil society, to embark on at least one community project per year and to establish links with NGOs, CBOs and other civil society structures. We continue to lose some of our very capable university members as they move on in life, so we need to broaden our membership base so that there is continuity in our Chapter functioning and achievements. We have managed to retain Kevin Town as an active member after he left the Pretoria University Chapter. He has set up our website and has agreed to be our Gauteng coordinator, liaising with the university-based UNA Chapters, the Dept. of Foreign Affairs, UNDP, UNIC and other Gauteng-based forums and initiatives.

The UWC Chapter had a very stimulating Peace and Disarmament Day focus on 20 and 21 September 2006. A series of shows of the Jeremy Gilley Peace One Day DVD was held, as well as an Inter-faith Peace gathering. These events were motivational and spiritually uplifting to those who attended and I wish to thank the UWC Chapter and Tahirih Matthee for organizing it. I wish to propose that we buy copies of the DVD for

each Chapter and I will write a reply letter to Jeremy Gilley to express our support and gratitude for his initiative.

An East African Regional Model UN conference was held in Nairobi, 1 – 4 August 2006 and we were invited to attend by Agnes Masika, the Secretary General of UNA Kenya and Allen Rutambo Ngari, the EARMUN Coordinator. Two of our Executive Committee members attended, Monique Theron and Walter Lotze. Monique is currently on a scholarship at the Univ. of Makerere, Uganda. Walter produced an excellent report on the current status of UNAs in Africa and our future links with other African UNAs. We will prepare an Africa perspective and proposal for the WFUNA 38th Plenary to be held in Buenos Aires, Argentina, 6 – 10 November 2006.

I will be leaving for Beijing, China on 10th October 2006 to attend an International Forum on UN Reform organized by UNA-China. They will pay all my costs for the trip and insisted that I participate as they wish to establish a link with South Africa. I will host the UNA-China President in Cape Town after the November 2006 Plenary and I will then arrange for him and his delegation to meet Chapter members who are available.

We need to grow our Chapters, so we decided to have workshops after the 7 October AGM, on Chapter management, Model UN-activities and Project Ideas.

I wish to thank the Executive Committee for working well with myself and the Secretary General during the past year. A special word of thanks to Cedric de Coning for his wonderful contribution to our UNA. He has, unfortunately for us, moved to Norway for a few years but we hope to retain him as a member and in a portfolio of some kind to continue to contribute using his excellent skills in international affairs.

Prof. Harold D. Herman
President of UNA-SA
6 October 2006