



WORLD FEDERATION OF UNITED NATIONS ASSOCIATIONS
FEDERATION MONDIALE DES ASSOCIATIONS POUR LES NATIONS UNIES

A peoples' movement for the United Nations

The Seoul Declaration: the UN's agenda is our agenda
Seoul, Republic of Korea, August 2009

The World Federation of United Nations Associations (WFUNA) and its member associations represented at the 39th Plenary Assembly adopt this Seoul Declaration and commend it to the Member States of the United Nations and to the peoples of the world.

As we emphasize the central role of the United Nations in global cooperation as the indispensable political framework with global representation capable of addressing of a broad range of issues, and as the most appropriate organization equipped to overcome the biggest threats to humanity.

We believe that the involvement of Civil Society is essential to the solution of global challenges on all levels – from identifying and informing on problems, participating in the discussion and negotiating of their resolution and monitoring the implementation of decisions.

As “a peoples' movement for the United Nations”, WFUNA seeks to combine education and action to help shape the UN's agenda and bring the UN closer to people in the 21st century.

Objectives of WFUNA

1. To be a peoples' movement for the United Nations.
2. To co-ordinate and further the activities of our members and to promote the establishment of new United Nations Associations.
3. To co-operate, where appropriate, with other organizations whose objectives include the support of the United Nations and its development.
4. To promote tolerance, understanding, solidarity and co-operation among men, women and children throughout the world without distinction as to race, sex, language, religion, disability or political orientation.
5. To contribute to the removal of obstacles to peace, to work for justice, security and disarmament, and to promote the development of peaceful co-existence and co-operation among all nations.
6. To strive for the recognition of and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms.
7. To promote economic development, enhancement of social progress and better standards of life.
8. To promote the respect for and strengthening of international law.
9. To promote research, information and education about the goals and work of the United Nations.

Policy priorities for 2009-12

The World Federation adopts the following overall strategic framework for the period 2009-12:

- ***Working for peace and security***, with a special focus on Responsibility to Protect, rule of law, and nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation
- ***Promoting sustainable development***, with a special focus on the UN Millennium Development Goals and Climate Change
- ***Securing human rights***, with a special focus on the Human Rights Council, human rights education, and implementing human rights standards at all levels
- ***Furthering international co-operation***, with a special focus on youth, education and UN Reform

Peace and Security

We reaffirm and promote the concept of human security, and the links between peace, development and human rights

We reaffirm our support for the ‘responsibility to protect’ concept (R2P), which encompasses the responsibility to prevent, react and re-build, and we welcome the recent reports of the UN Secretary-General. We will work towards its development, strengthening and proper application.

We strongly support UN’s efforts in conflict prevention and resolution, including preventive diplomacy by the UN Secretary-General and the Security Council, and welcome states increasing willingness to resolve disputes through application of international law. We also encourage greater participation by women in conflict prevention and resolution, as outlined in Security Council Resolution 1325.

We express our concern about continuing failure of political leaders to agree on the steps needed to resolve ongoing armed conflicts and call for them to show new determination to find sustainable solutions to the conflicts that cause tremendous amount of human suffering.

We applaud the continuing progress to eliminate all weapons of mass destruction, and particularly welcome the recent moves to reinvigorate nuclear disarmament and to strengthen non-proliferation. We strongly urge that all members of UN implement fully the resolutions of the UN Security Council in this regard.

We will work to secure popular support for a successful 2010 Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference, and hope that the conference further invigorates initiatives such as ratification by all nuclear-weapons states of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty and the establishment of nuclear-weapons-free zones around the world. We commend the vital work of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), and call on all states to increase the resources available for its work. We note that the existing nuclear-weapons states have a particular responsibility to take steps towards disarmament.

We appreciate the leading role that the General Assembly continues to play in pressing governments toward disarmament, from nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction to reductions in conventional forces.

We advocate the signing and ratification by all UN Member States of the Cluster Munitions Convention, and hope that this life-saving treaty will soon enter into force.

We strongly support the establishment of an international system for the regulation of the arms trade -- including an effective bar to transfer of weapons to non-state actors such as drug traffickers, terrorists and violent factions -- with appropriate monitoring to assure transparency and mutual confidence.

After more than 60 years of UN peacekeeping, we celebrate the vital contribution that the UN continues to make in this area. We are concerned that the steep rise in the UN's peacekeeping commitments is leaving missions underfunded and overstretched, and are dismayed at the reluctance of member states to contribute personnel, equipment and funding to missions. We welcome the continuing review of peacekeeping operations by the UN Security Council and General Assembly; we express hope that future missions are given realistic mandates; and we call on governments to adequately support such missions. We also call for the development of a greater rapid reaction capability for UN peacekeeping.

We support the UN Peacebuilding Fund, and welcome efforts of the Peacebuilding Commission in coordinating humanitarian and development agencies' activities in order to prevent post-conflict states from slipping back into conflict.

We condemn all acts of terrorism and call on governments to support and work with the multi-agency 'UN Action to Counter Terrorism' initiative, which aims to address the conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism; prevent and combat terrorism, including by building the capacity of states to do so; and to ensure that human rights and the rule of law are safeguarded in the fight against terrorism. We urge governments to overcome political differences and conclude a comprehensive convention against terrorism.

We reaffirm the importance of a 'culture of peace' and inter-cultural dialogue in support of such a culture; and celebrate UNESCO's efforts to further peace education, promote and protect culture, and foster inter-cultural dialogue and dialogue between civilizations.

Sustainable Development

We give our full support to the UN Secretary-General's call for countries to 'Seal the Deal' on climate change at Copenhagen 2009, and believe that the following points must be addressed for success:

- ambitious legally binding emission reduction targets for industrialized countries;
- strong commitments by major developing countries to limit the growth of their emissions;
- significant financial resources and transfer of relevant technologies to help developing countries limit emissions, and mitigate and adapt to the impacts of climate change;
- an efficient institutional mechanism for disbursing these funds and an equitable and accountable governance structure;

- a framework to bolster the climate resilience of vulnerable countries, including those impacted by desertification, and thus protect lives and livelihoods, especially in marginal communities and among indigenous people
- support for UNEP's 'Global Green New Deal', which aims to inspire and enable governments to begin the shift towards a global economy driven by massive job creation from the growth of resource- and energy-efficient construction, transport, agriculture, energy and waste management; and
- Global cooperation on the development and diffusion of sustainable technology.

We are now approaching the last five years of the UN's Millennium Development Goals timeframe. Although much progress has been made, certain Goals and particular geographic regions have consistently fallen short of progress targets. We are disappointed in the lack of necessary action from governments to meet the targets. We advocate for sustained and increased efforts during the next three years to meet the MDGs, especially in those areas; and we will begin to canvass civil society for ideas on how the MDG framework should be taken forward after 2015.

Taking into account the impact of the global economic crisis on the world's most vulnerable people, and affirming the Doha Declaration on Financing for Development, we support efforts to:

- ensure that aid and debt relief commitments are fulfilled;
- focus on access of the poor to food and clean water, including investing in agricultural production for domestic consumption, and integrated strategies for long-term food security
- promote greater coordination between the UN, the Bretton Woods institutions and other UN specialized agencies, and the World Trade Organization;
- reform international trade and financial systems;
- encourage implementation of new development financing mechanisms;
- ensure and secure access to quality education for all – with special focus on women and girls.
- reinvigorate MDG8 - a global partnership for development.

We commend the work of the World Health Organization to halt the spread of SARS and H5N1 avian influenza, and call on governments to support WHO in its efforts to address the H1N1 pandemic. We also continue to highlight the plight of people affected by HIV/AIDS, and call for increased support for UNAIDS.

We affirm the provisions of the UN Convention against Corruption and support UNODC's Global Programme against Corruption, which assists states with vulnerable developing or transitional economies by promoting anti-corruption measures in the public and private sector.

We note that the private sector is an important driver of growth, but that growth must be responsible. We support the Global Compact's role in promoting responsible business, and encourage UNAs to work with the private sector and civil society organizations in support of the Global Compact's ten principles.

Human Rights

We encourage our member UNAs to work with other civil society organizations to support the ratification and implementation of all international treaties on human rights including labor rights and humanitarian law; to promote effective national legal guarantees and remedies for these rights; and promote human rights education.

Noting that the UN General Assembly will review the performance and procedures of the Human Rights Council in 2011, we encourage our member UNAs to work with their governments and other civil society organizations to assess its performance and to generate ideas on how it could be strengthened.

We emphasize the importance of democracy as a means of securing human rights and promoting the rule of law, urge expanded UN roles in election monitoring, and urge governments to increase their support to the UN Democracy Fund.

We strongly support the role of OCHA as the world's humanitarian co-ordinator, and promote contributions to the Central Emergency Response Fund to enable more timely and reliable humanitarian assistance to those affected by natural disasters, armed conflict and – increasingly – climate change.

We note the vital work being carried out by the UN's frontline agencies – including the World Food Programme, UNHCR and UNICEF – and we will strive to promote and support them.

Noting that violence against women has severe implications for the health, well-being and development of families and communities, we warmly welcome the UN Secretary-General's campaign for men and women to 'unite to end violence against women'.

In accordance with the international law on the rights of the child, we will work to end the exploitation of children, for the abolition of child labour, for prevention of child soldiers, and for the elimination of child pornography.

International Co-operation

We declare that global peace, justice and prosperity depend essentially on multilateral co-operation, for which the UN is the key facilitating organization. We call upon Member States and other parties to re-commit themselves toward this end.

We fully support the initiative of Secretary General Ban Ki-moon for “renewed multilateralism” and “compassionate multilateralism” to underpin international co-operation.

We believe civil society plays a vital role in meeting global challenges and will work to increase its role and presence in the United Nations system.

We will remain engaged in the ongoing process to reform the UN to enable it to respond rapidly and effectively to the full range of global challenges.

We call for a reform of the UN Security Council that takes into account the dual imperatives of equitable representation and effectiveness.

We aim to promote and support the ‘One UN’ effort to ‘deliver as one’ at the country level, and urge that such ‘joined-up’ thinking also takes place at the UN headquarters and among Member State donors.

Recognizing the valuable work that has been done by the UN on behalf of the world’s women since 1945, and noting that the UN’s primary projects for promoting women’s issues have become excessively fragmented and under-resourced, we strongly support the creation of a robust, adequately resourced, consolidated women’s agency headed by a leader at the rank of Under-Secretary-General.

An informed and supportive public is a major determinant of a nation’s willingness to support issues on the UN’s agenda. We ask our member UNAs to commit themselves to raising awareness of, and education on, the UN and its work as a major component of their strategy.

We aim to engage and galvanize young people to be leaders and world citizens, so that they embrace and celebrate global interdependence and champion the ideals of the United Nations. We particularly encourage member UNAs to promote teaching about the UN in schools. We will continue WFUNA’s focus on Model UNs around the world and encourage member UNAs to arrange national Model UNs.

We pledge ourselves to support international co-operation and civil society action in support of the vision of the UN Charter and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights; and we encourage the peoples of the world to respond to our global citizen campaign’s call to action.