

**Proposal for WFUNA Plenary 2009**

That an additional topic be added to Plenary Session 2 on “**UN Reform**”.

The UN is active on a very wide range of crucial issues for addressing global problems and promoting its future, and has been successful in a significant number of cases. However, there are also many situations where it has not been successful, and has let down both the people which it promises to assist, and itself in degrading its reputation. Many programs fall short of their objectives and many issues remain unaddressed. Those who wish to denigrate the institution have a wealth of resources with which to build their cases.

That there will be failures is inevitable give the magnitude, complexity and novelty of the initiatives that the UN is undertaking on a daily basis. However, it is not clear that sufficient effort is being expended in enhancing the performance of the UN, and ensuring that it is as effective as it could be. There are plenty of places to look for the causes of the UN's inadequate performance; from its organisation structures, its control mechanisms, the people employed, the missions established, the support (or lack) given by member states, the politicising of the process, and the impact of its many detractors. Also, inadequate recognition of the very real strengths and achievements of the UN mean that effort is not always placed where real benefits can be gained. The UN leadership is clearly aware of the need for reform, but the outcome of Annan's bold attempts at reform in 2005 demonstrate the magnitude of the political barriers that are presented.

While there are many NGOs pursuing a wealth of specific issues, there are few that address the capability of the UN to act effectively on these issues. UNAs are a natural ally of UN Reform, as they are committed to an effective UN as such. National UNAs can, potentially, place pressure on their own governments to promote effectiveness of the UN, and to address the political conflicts that prevent effective reform from taking place.

Such a seminar requires might be structured as follows:

1. Expert analysis of the major impediments to effective UN reform. (Possibly Ramesh Thakur or someone from the WFM 'Reform the UN' project)
2. Discussion of the types of initiatives that national UNAs can take to help their countries promote UN reform, and
3. Discussion on the ways in which WFUNA can support UNAs.
4. Preparation of recommendations of what WFUNA and the national UNAs can do to promote UN Reform.



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