

IUNA News:
IRISH UNITED NATIONS NEWSLETTER, Winter 2005



Editorial: 2005

'As the UN ponders reform- we've probably never needed the organisation so acutely!'



The recently announced (and far-reaching) UN reform proposals are likely to expedite unprecedented organizational change. Secretary-General Annan has made Mark Malloch Brown, (respected World Bank and UNDP supremo) his new chief of staff. As the catastrophe in south-east Asia 'tests' the UN's capacity- the tsunami has also proven a terrible demonstration that some problems must be dealt with at the global level. This further highlights the UN's humanitarian role! Our newsletter also provides information on the International Years of Micro credit, Sport and Physics (celebrated this year); the observance of the current international decades and a new guide to MUNGA's. We thank you for your support and look forward to working with you on all these important subjects during 2005.

ISSUES: The Tsunami Disaster

With an estimated death toll of 150,000 and rising, the Irish UN Association has continued to respond to the many inquiries received from the press and public. The body of 27 year old Ms. Eilis Finnegan has been identified in Thailand. Despite considerable efforts, a worrying number of Irish citizens still remain un-accounted for. The government has issued travel advice in regard to the Maldives, eastern Sri Lanka and the west coast of Thailand. Ambassador Mulhall, heading the search for missing Irish people, reported that he was "resigned to the fact that we may suffer a small number of Irish deaths". The government held

talks about the possibility of sending Irish soldiers and have met with NGO's to discuss how the aid programme should be co-ordinated. Irish relief agencies are operational in the region, and military and Garda teams are being dispatched. The charitable response from the Irish public has been overwhelming. IUNA would like to express our heart-felt concern for the missing and our thoughts and sympathies are with the families at this distressing time.

UN Humanitarian Response



The UN is distributing aid in Indonesia's hard-hit Aceh province as damage (and airfield closure) created delays. World Food Programme aircraft carrying logistical equipment arrived in Sri Lanka 2/1/05 and dispatched food to 253,000 people- enough for 15 days. WFP estimate that in north/northwest Maldives 17,000 people need food aid for 6 months; 60,000 others requiring food for shorter periods. A WFP assessment of Myanmar's west coast concluded that 2 of 26 townships had suffered serious damage. UN and relief agencies are also prioritizing crisis-hit Phuket, Tamil Nadu, Somali and Kenyan coast and other affected regions. UN Relief Co-ordinator Jan Egeland said the death toll is likely to "grow exponentially". Mr. Annan launched a high-level conference in Jakarta, appealing for funds for the relief effort.

Further Information:

Department of Foreign Affairs Emergency help line 01-4082302, 01-4082876; 01-4082308
Regional UN Information Centre (RUSIC)
Brussels, Tel.: +32 (0)2 788 8462; Fax: 788 8485;
info@runic-europe.org; www.runic-europe.org
UN World Food Programme, London Media Office, Tel. +44-20-75929292, Mob. 7968-008474
UN News Centre, www.un.org/apps/news. Fax. (001) 212-963-7055, Tel: (212) 963-4475
UN Office for the Co-ordination of Humanitarian Affairs, <http://ochaonline.un.org/>
Media- Ms Elizabeth Byrs, Geneva, Tel: (41) 22 917 26 53; Mob: (41) 79 473 45 70; Fax: 917 00 20

For further information about the United Nations we invite you to peruse the main UN System web-site at www.un.org or the Regional UN Information Centre web-site <http://www.runic-europe.org> or the Irish UN Association's web-site at www.irish-una.org

IUNA News:

IRISH UNITED NATIONS NEWSLETTER, Winter 2005



Celebrating the 2005 International Years

The General Assembly has launched the International Year for Sport and Physical Education (2005) following the resolution on sport as a means to promote education, health, development and peace. The Assembly also invited governments to accelerate the elaboration of an international anti-doping convention in all sports activities, and asked the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), in cooperation with other relevant international and regional bodies, to coordinate the elaboration of such a convention. The Assembly also designated 2005 as the International Year of Micro credit stating that the Year will be an important opportunity to give impetus to micro finance programmes throughout the world. The key objectives for the Year are to unite Member States, UN Agencies and Micro finance Partners to build sustainable financial sectors and achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The World Year of Physics (WYP) is a worldwide celebration of physics and its importance in our everyday lives. The WYP has been upgraded to the International Year of Physics (IYP) as a result of a resolution passed by the UN. IYP aims to raise public awareness of physics and physical science and provides the opportunity to celebrate Einstein and his influence on life in the 21st century. Also relevant, the government have decided that 2005 will be known as Hamilton Year, after William Rowan Hamilton, Ireland's most eminent scientist who was born in Dublin on 4th August 1805. The aim of the celebration is to draw attention to Ireland's proud scientific heritage and IUNA will include reference to Hamilton Year in our operational programmes. IUNA is also taking steps to appropriately mark the international years and to disseminate information about them to the public in Ireland.

Calendar of International Decades

2005 sees the start of the UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (2005-2014) and the International Decade for Action, "Water for Life" (commencing 22 March 2005). During 2005 the Irish UN Association will celebrate these important events. We will also continue to raise public awareness in respect of the United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty (1997-2007); the International Decade for a Culture of Peace and Non-violence for the Children of the

World (2001-2010); the Second International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism (2001-2010); the Decade to Roll Back Malaria in Developing Countries, Particularly in Africa (2001-2010) and the United Nations Literacy Decade: Literacy for all (2003-2012). IUNA would like to encourage public initiatives to mark these International Decades.

Further details on the international years and decades can be obtained from our web-site at www.irish-una.org

RESOURCES: The Winning Delegate: An Insider's Guide to Model United Nations by Kerem Turunc (Nostras Books, New York, 2005) \$18.95 SBN: 975-93333-1-7, 125 pp.

This source book is divided into six logical and easy to use chapters starting with an introduction providing basic information about the UN System; researching topic papers and a list of resources. Chapter 3 provides rules of procedure and chapter 4 deals with conference structures. Chapter 5 covers delivering speeches and chapter 6 with resolutions. Additionally, a glossary with tens of UN and MUN-related terms and abbreviations will help you with preparation as well as at the conference. A bonus appendix gives you the list of all member nations of the UN with admission dates and bloc membership information. The author was Secretary-General of the Yale Model United Nations. Although written with a mainly American audience in mind, we believe it will have something to offer all MUN'ers from the beginner to the expert level. There are too few guides of this sort around and it will be a useful resource for everyone engaged in UN youth work.



Youth at the United Nations

Ask the Editor

We welcome new members and a separate tsunami appeal is distributed with this edition of *IUNA News*. The views expressed in this Newsletter do not necessarily represent those of the Irish UN Association. Copyright is duly acknowledged. Items for the editor and membership inquiries can be sent to IUNA News, Irish UN Association, 14 Lower Pembroke Street, Dublin 2, by phone to Dublin 6616920 or by e-mail to iuna@ireland.com