

REPORT from IAAP Team of NGO Representatives to the United Nations

–Edited by Judy Kuriansky, IAAP Main NGO Representative to the United Nations

IAAP Advancing Psychology in Global Issues at the United Nations

IAAP continues to make impressive steps towards advancing the organization's mission at the United Nations. The team members of NGO representatives to the United Nations have ongoing active roles as chairs of committees, members of boards of important committees, speakers on panels, participants in briefings, and advocates at high level commissions concerning the role of psychology in global issues and in achieving the UN Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). They are also involved in strategizing about the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) that will follow the 2015 conclusion of the MDGs. The activities and field projects continue to be presented widely at professional conferences in regard to issues like poverty, HIV/AIDS, empowerment and entrepreneurship training, among other topics, that attract interest from high level executives and international stakeholders, as well as from various media. Videos produced about these projects are useful tools in generating understanding and interest in collaboration and partnerships (e.g. evident in a presentation at UNESCO). The team continues to be actively involved in the annual Psychology Day at the UN, with IAAP team members on committees and serving as co-chair, and participating in the activities and leadership of the newly formed Psychology Coalition at the United Nations. These are described in more detail in articles in this special section. The IAAP UN teams in NY, Geneva, and Vienna welcome participation, contributions, and cooperation with IAAP divisions, members and other professionals.

ECOSOC High-Level Ministerial Review: Side Event on “Leveraging Psychology to Eradicate Poverty by Promoting Decent Work”

IAAP and other members of the Psychology Coalition at the UN presented a Side Event at the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) High- Level Segment of the Annual Ministerial Review in July 2012 at United Nations Headquarters in New York City. The title of the Side Event, held on July 9th, was “Leveraging Psychology to Eradicate Poverty by Promoting Decent Work.”

The content of the event stemmed from the International Labor Organization's (ILO) Decent Work Agenda that offers a blueprint for promoting inclusive economic growth and fair globalization. Psychological research has supported the contention that decent work is a major factor impacting the ability of individuals to climb out, and stay out, of poverty. Six panelists focused on how the science and practice of psychology can be leveraged to help eradicate poverty – Millennium Development Goal #1 – by promoting decent work and well-being. Panelists explored the role of psychology in breaking the cycle of poverty, creating sustainable livelihoods, empowering at-risk individuals and translating the ILO's agenda into actionable development strategies.



Panel at ECOSOC Ministerial Review on Leveraging Psychology to Eradicate Poverty by Promoting Decent Work

Walter Reichman, IAAP main representative to ECOSOC, served as moderator and also discussant after each presentation.

The first speaker, Lori Foster Thompson, UN NGO representative for the Society for Industrial and Organizational Psychology (SIOP), described the activities of organizational psychology and how they have been used, and could be further used, to help reduce world poverty. She specified how organizational psychology secured pay equity among aid workers who were from outside the country they were serving (expats) with those who were native to the country. This equity led to greater effectiveness in bringing aid to impoverished communities. Dr. Thompson's presentation was particularly appropriate since few in the United Nations know about the work of organizational psychologists.

IAAP UN NGO representative Mary O'Neill Berry, also an organizational psychologist, described the activities of an organizational psychologist working in countries where poverty and HIV/AIDS infection rates are both high. She described a unique program whereby she and IAAP's Judy Kuriansky collaborated with other stakeholders, including local organizations on the ground, to design, administer, and evaluate a camp for at-risk girls in the Kingdom of Lesotho, Africa. An important part of the program was to teach the girls entrepreneurship skills to break out of the cycle of poverty and disease. She described how the camp facilitated empowerment of the girls, increasing their self-esteem and knowledge about HIV/AIDS, and promoting a work ethic and ideas for creating small businesses. Data was presented to demonstrate the success of the camp. The presentation also demonstrated that the activities of organizational psychologists expand beyond traditional business organizations to have worldwide humanitarian applications.

IAAP professional affiliate Janice Bloch, an expert on autism spectrum disorders (ASD), described how many of these individuals have abilities and motivation to work but encounter serious problems in finding decent work and as a result, often face poverty. Some persons with ASD, she said, are bright, responsible, detail- and task-oriented men and women who excel in visual skills, music, math and art, and have higher than average IQs, but lack feelings of self-respect, well-being and dignity—aspects shown by psychology to be related to decent work. Her analysis of over 500 replies to a twitter survey confirmed that the lack of decent work opportunities coupled with employers lack of knowledge about the strengths and challenges of individuals with ASD directly correlated with feelings of depression and low self-esteem for the respondents. With 1 in 88 children being diagnosed with ASD today, she concluded that educating teachers and employers would lead to an understanding of the special needs of this group that would financially benefit both employers, and employees with ASD who can contribute valuably to the workforce.

Panelist Michael O’Conner, the Commissioner for Victim’s Rights in Southern Australia, described how crime exacerbates poverty by further diminishing the wealth of the least developed and developing countries, thus leaving less money to help citizens rise out of poverty. In addition, the victims of crime are often thrown into poverty as a consequence of the crimes against them. He called for the UN development goals to include aid to victims of crime.

IAAP’s Judy Kuriansky reviewed the relationship between psychological factors and poverty, tracing research findings about work satisfaction and productivity, and presented exciting new efforts by United Nations agencies, governments, civil society, and other stakeholders to measure development progress well-being other than just by Gross Domestic Product (GDP). These efforts challenge the assumption that the higher the GDP, the happier citizens will be. She presented examples of indices and measures being used, and the latest research and applications worldwide by both governments, economists and psychologists that support a new paradigm of measuring development, taking into account not just economic growth but wellbeing.

Jeffrey Saltzman, CEO of OrgVitality, a management consulting firm, reported about his research project which looked at the job satisfaction of 800,000 employees in 61 companies worldwide. The results showed that satisfaction was highest among people who considered their workload to be about right, while those who say they are under-worked are even less happy than those who say they are overworked. The evidence supports the importance of decent work and that the social safety net will not lead to an unmotivated citizenry.

– submitted by **Walter Reichman, Ed.D. IAAP UN NGO representative**

Trafficking in Persons: Update of Action at the United Nations

On 16 September 2012, a presentation on trafficking in persons was hosted by the United States Mission to the UN in New York. The speaker, Nan Kennelly, Principal Deputy in the Office to Monitor & Combat Trafficking in Persons of the United States Department of State (DOS), discussed topics from the June 2012 Trafficking in Persons (TIP) Report.

The TIP report identifies annually how well, or poorly, countries are dealing with human trafficking. For the US government, trafficking involves all conduct that compels servitude for forced sex or labor. Exploitation is the key component, not movement of people.

IAAP UN representative Martin Butler attended the meeting, in the course of his ongoing involvement in this issue being addressed at the UN.

A brief history of anti-trafficking efforts was provided, starting with the Palermo Protocol and the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000. The US held other governments responsible for controlling trafficking in their countries. Three years ago, Secretary of State Hillary Clinton stated that the USA was to be included as a ranked country, implemented for the first time in the 2012 TIP Report. The issue is not just where is trafficking the worst; as a tier system is utilized to evaluate countries. Each country is looked at individually to see if minimum standards are met consistent with that country’s capacity; in this way, each country is ranked against itself. If minimum standards are met, a country is ranked as Tier 1. Tier 2 countries are those that are working on the issue, and have met some, but not all, minimum standards. These countries, including most of Africa, are put on a watch list. An action a Tier 2 country might take to meet standards is to refer a victim of trafficking to an NGO, consistent with that country’s capacity. Countries that are Tier 3 have the lowest ranking and are subject to sanctions. Many governments

do not like the ranking system but do not state that the TIP report is wildly wrong, and most countries provide the data on which to base the rankings.

The bad news is that no country is doing enough. The International Labor Organization estimates that approximately 20 million people are held in a trafficked situation worldwide. The U.S. Department of State thinks that this estimate is low.

Every US embassy has personnel who follow trafficking, resulting in a 30 percent increase in identification of victims of trafficking and a 10 percent increase in the number of trafficking convictions worldwide.

Remediation efforts need to be focus on victim protection and be victim-centered. Victim-led response should drive policy responses. A legal and regulatory framework is required for restitution to victims. Laws need to recognize victims as people and as victims of a crime. Every category of person can experience trafficking: male, female, adult, child, immigrants, and citizens of the country. The US has all types of trafficking, with the exception of child soldiers, and possibly inherited debt-servitude.

There is a unique American commitment to make trafficking victims whole. Immigrant victims should be given a choice of returning to their home country or remaining, without forcing these decisions. Some survivors of trafficking might be charged as criminals, for example, if a visa is overstayed. Sometimes this happens when there has been a violation of a sponsorship agreement and the victim is forced into debt bondage with the victim's passport held. New York State has very good laws.

No records are kept if a person becomes a criminal due to trafficking. Many countries have a fear that this attitude will lead to people faking trafficking histories, especially in seeking citizenship and possibly asylum. The US has not been overwhelmed with such cases.

Other issues are that adult victims should never be detained. There is an issue as to whether or not prostituted minors should be confined.

Governments must not sit around waiting for victims to appear, said Ms. Kennelly; instead, affirmative efforts are needed to find victims. Governments had a reverse incentive to find victims, to guarantee a ranking in the TIP report. As a result, in 2008 there was a change: If more than one trafficking victim was identified, a country would be in the TIP report.

Risks for those working with survivors of trafficking were noted. To become involved with anti-trafficking efforts, USA individuals can write their congressperson to express a concern, or can work with a faith-based community.

Wanting to conclude her presentation on an optimistic note, Ms. Kennelly noted greater sophistication now in understanding the dynamics of trafficking than years ago. Since much trafficking occurs in the context of legal migration, more work is needed on this. Yet, the international community has a greater understanding about coercion; for example, work is intensifying on certain sectors such as domestic workers, including concern about how to address trafficking and involuntary servitude by diplomats, and concern about people enslaved in circumstances that receive little attention, for example, fishermen victims on fishing boats for years who might be thrown overboard if he complains.

Another optimistic note is that there is growing corporate interest in trafficking, as companies do not want their brand or reputation sullied by trafficking issues.

Social media can be effective in spreading knowledge about trafficking.

The USA is always eager to work with those involved in eliminating trafficking.

The question and answer session produced several noteworthy comments and concerns. One participant queried the extent of the demand that drives trafficking, especially regarding commercial sex; vigorous law enforcement is seen as the response.

There also needs to be recognition of how slavery is frequently used in everyday products, calling for consideration of one's "slavery footprint." Do you purchase commercial sex? If so, your slavery footprint increases dramatically. Creative ways are needed to get young people to think about these issues. In conversations with youth, consider that not only are pregnancies and sexually transmitted diseases risks, but commercial sex is wrong.

Another audience member questioned the gender breakdown of victims. Ms. Kennelly responded that while sex trafficking victims are mostly women, labor trafficking victims are both men and women. Data questions can flummox the issue, since both forced labor and commercial sex/forced prostitution are terrible crimes. The DOS no longer has the breakdown while individual US states might.

Another question involved the reliability of responses, especially if names are not asked for from victims. Ms. Kennelly said she thinks the data are very reliable as the concern is the elements of the crime and the relevant statute.

—submitted by Martin Butler, IAAP UN representative

Thematic Debate on Drugs and Crime as Threats to Development

On 26 June 2012, the United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime (UNODC) hosted a Thematic Debate Drugs and Crime as Threats to Development. Established in 1997 through a merger between the United Nations Drug Control Programme and the Centre for International Crime Prevention, UNODC operates in all regions of the world through an extensive network of field offices (see www.unodc.org).

The UNODC focuses on three main issues: (1) Field-based technical cooperation projects to enhance the capacity of Member States to counteract illicit drugs, crime and terrorism; (2) Research and analytical work to increase knowledge and understanding of drugs and crime issues and expand the evidence base for policy and operational decisions; and (3) Normative work to assist United Nations member states in the ratification and implementation of the relevant international treaties, the development of domestic legislation on drugs, crime and terrorism, and the provision of secretariat and substantive services to the treaty-based and governing bodies.

This debate, convened on International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking, was one of the first of its kind to address Crime and Drugs, two issues that threaten to destabilize the rule of law and political security in developing nations that are not included in the Millennium Development Goals. There was unanimity among the voices present that Drugs and Crime need to be included in all post-2015 development plans.

Two important themes highlighted during the Thematic Debate on Drugs and Crime were: (1) the central role NGOs can play in addressing issues related to drugs and organized crime, and (2) the need for evidence-based psychological support systems for users of drugs.

These two issues are pertinent to many members of IAAP, as psychologists are often at the frontlines in the treatment of criminal populations as well as drug treatment and prevention efforts.

It is also clear that collaboration among applied psychologists, UN Member States, civil society, and the private sector, was broadly encouraged. UNODC chair Dr. Yuri Fedetov made sure that the voices of NGOs were heard at the debate, praised the work of NGOs, and allotted enough time so that every NGO that was scheduled to speak had the chance to do so. Further, then-President of the General Assembly, Qatar Ambassador Nassir Abdulaziz Al-Nasser, graciously allowed extra time in the debate for NGOs to speak and donated about ten minutes of the time allotted to him for NGOs to make concluding remarks so that the voices of civil society could be expressed.

In further support of the participation on NGOs, in a statement given before the panel at the afternoon session, an Austrian government representative stated that “NGOs provide the links to those that have to be at the center of our very efforts – those who are affected by crime and drug trafficking,” and that, “our work can only benefit from their contributions and we support their participation on all levels.”

This impressively humanistic, client-focused tone of statements was echoed by several governments. The Finnish government representative added that the victims of organized crime and the drug trade, those addicted to drugs, and the farmers who grow drugs to support their livelihoods, should not be the focus of UN debates; instead, that efforts should target the “big players” in the on drug trade. Finland recommended medical interventions as the preferred approach for addressing drug users and addicts. Francisco De Antueno, Secretary of the Permanent Mission of Argentina to the United Nations, concurred, saying that, “Criminal law should not confuse addicts with the other [more significant] players.”

Those parties advocating for the medical rights of individuals struggling with addictive issues were tempered by calls to combat drugs from the demand side rather than focusing on the criminals on the supply side. Ambassador H. E. Dr. Palitha T.B. Kohona, Permanent Representative of Sri Lanka to the United Nations, said that, “Poor farmers, encouraged by drug lords, will continue to rely on this source of income as long as there is a demand and there is no alternative source of income.” Mr. Will Nankervis, Counsellor at the Australian Mission to the United Nations, supported the Sri Lankan statement, adding that the drug problem needs to be addressed from the demand, saying that “Perhaps the best prevention begins with destination or ‘user’ countries.” The concept of “shared responsibility” between the developed and developing worlds was a major theme in the morning debates.

Throughout the thematic debates, staggering facts and figures on both drugs and crime were presented in order to illustrate the real effect that drugs and organized crime have on development. The New Zealand’s Permanent Representative to the United Nations, H.E. Jim McLay, reported that organized crime is estimated to be larger than the economy of Mexico and if it were to represent a country it would be the world’s fourteenth largest economy. Dr. Stewart Patrick, Senior Fellow and Director of the International Institutions and Global Governance Program at the Council on Foreign Relations, illustrated the severe economic impact corruption can have on developing countries with a report that last year Afghans paid 2.5 billion dollars in bribes, that is equal to twenty percent of their total economy. The point that crime and drugs are major roadblocks to development was echoed by many speakers throughout the debates.

The debate on crime was broad-reaching and included statements on illegal practices as human trafficking, the arms trade, and specific regional issues like rhinoceros-poaching in Africa,

highlighted by a South African Ambassador present at the debate. Dr. Otaviano Canuto, World Bank Vice President for the Poverty Reduction and Economic Management (PREM) Network, made it clear that among all the forms of organized crime, the drug trade represented the largest dollar amounts and was therefore the most insidious.

Japan's Deputy Permanent Representative to the United Nations, H.E. Kazuo Kodama, supported Dr. Canuto's statement, noting that the global drug trade is worth about \$1.3 trillion a year, which is ten times the size of Official Development Aid (ODA). The representative from Colombia added that not only does the drug trade dwarf international aid but that all of the resources spent fighting drugs in his country could have gone to development.

Sri Lankan Ambassador Kohona referenced a US government document, "Narco-Terrorism: International Drug Trafficking and Terrorism – a Dangerous Mix," as a resource for understanding the connection between drugs and terrorism. This 2003 document from the United States Senate judiciary committee highlights the connections between the drug trade and various terrorist groups as evidenced by intelligence operations, among other sources (<http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/CHRG-108shrg90052/pdf/CHRG-108shrg90052.pdf>).

Given the limited resources for development when compared with the large amount of illicit funds circulating throughout the world, several representatives stated the need "to confiscate the money that comes from the proceeds of crime." The Australian counselor, Mr. Will Nankervis talked about his country's efforts in establishing local transnational crime coordination centers to support governments in both developing and developed countries in maintaining the rule of law. Evidence-based best practices not only in law enforcement and drug treatment were also highlighted. Her Royal Highness Princess Bajarakitiyabha Mahidol of Thailand demonstrated how Sustainable Alternative Development projects in Thailand have been successful in driving opium production down to very low levels. Sustainable Alternative Development projects coordinated by the UNODC are focused "on helping small rural farmers with licit income generation activities to reduce their dependency on income from opium poppy and coca bush." (<http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/alternative-development/making-a-difference-through-alternative-development.html>)

The Thai example was presented alongside other responses to crime and drugs developed at the regional level. Among the programs highlighted, and praised by several member states, was the Central American Integration Center (SICA), created by Central American countries themselves, with ancillary international support, rather than being imposed by other countries or international aid organizations. Mr. Nankervis also highlighted a program in South America, PREVENIR, that its government was working on with Germany.

The importance of evidence-based approaches to drug and crime issues was stressed by many speakers. Austria's representative reported on the International Anti-corruption Academy (IACA) in Laxenburg, as a resource for research and training of criminal justice and law enforcement professionals.

A Costa Rican representative was one of the few representatives of countries that called on the need for social inclusion of youth and the promotion of drug education and prevention programs. Towards the end of the debate, a young man from Uganda, Mr. Mwandari Bennett Alinda, addressed the panel by saying that, "We refuse to believe that people addicted to drugs cannot have a normal life [and that we need to] appeal to psychological support systems to give addicts a sense of hope." Mr. Alinda, the sole voice of youth represented at the debates, added that "Most youth

lack a sense of identity, because so many have come from broken families and have been orphaned, and therefore identify with drugs.”

The question remains: What can we do as professionals who apply the science of psychology to real world problems? First, we can be in touch with those governments that support the work of the UNODC. In this regard, this author contacted the Permanent Mission of Austria to the United Nations and found that mission staff member Julia Thallinger expressed great interest in IAAP representatives’ reactions to the debate and encouraged us to be active in future work at the United Nations. Ms. Thallinger explained that Austria is a member of “Friends of the UNODC” which was partly responsible for recruiting high level speakers and members of the UN Secretariat to attend this high level meeting.

In addition, psychologists can bring their knowledge of evidence-based approaches to treatment and prevention of addictive disorders and evaluation of evidence-based approaches applied to diverse cultures and regions.

Further, another significant area of participation would be for experts in forensic psychology, behavioral economics, and other areas of applied psychology, to interface with governments and UN organizations.

IAAP members who are interested in working on this issue are encouraged to email (1) wolfgang.beiglboeck@api.or.at (Dr. Wolfgang Beiglboeck) and (2) wakanyc@yahoo.com (Neil Walsh)

– Submitted by Neil Ryan Walsh, MA, CASACT, IAAP special assignment professional affiliate and Wolfgang Beiglboeck, IAAP UN NGO representative in Vienna

The Working Session of the Open-Ended Working Group on Ageing at the UN



Committee Chairman Mateo Estreme during “Opening Session” of the Working Group.

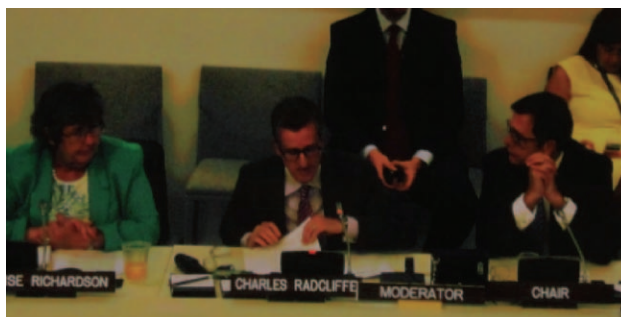
Day 1. Opening Session

The newly elected chairman Mr. Mateo Estreme from the Permanent Mission of Argentina to the UN called to order the 3rd Working Session of the Open-Ended Working Group on Ageing which took place on 21 and 22 August 2012. He noted that the working group had been endorsed by seventy-six organizations and gave an overview and brief history of the NGO Committee on Ageing. Founded in 1977, the Committee participated in the UN’s First World Assembly on Ageing which occurred in Vienna in 1982, and the First UN International Day of Older Persons in 1991. The UN’s Second World Assembly on Ageing took place in 2002. A member of the Conference of

NGOs (CoNGO), the Committee works to raise global awareness to the issues and challenges of ageing, and works within the UN community to integrate the issue of ageing into UN policies and programs. He reminded the audience that the goal of the committee is to further the UN mission of creating a society for all ages.

One of the goals of the committee is to promote a new Convention for the Human Rights of Older Persons. This needs to be preceded by an implementation of the outcomes from the International Plan of Action on Ageing that was held in Madrid in 2005. The Working Group was established in 2010.

Day 1. Panel on “Age Discrimination”



Panelists during “Panel 1: Age Discrimination”, from left to right: Louise Richardson, Charles Radcliffe, and Mateo Estreme.

The first panel of the Working Group dealt with the issue of age discrimination. The moderator was Charles Radcliffe. The first speaker, Alejandro Morlachetti, has worked with organizations including UNICEF, UNDP, PAHO/WHO, UNFPA, ILO, and the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights. He spoke about how the prohibition of discrimination is one of the founding principles of the international human rights law and applies to every person. He cited Article 7 of the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and members of their families which explicitly prohibits age-based discrimination. Even though international human rights laws that already exist do apply to older persons, he asked the audience if these laws adequately protect age as a forbidden ground of discrimination. He concluded by saying that the UN must reaffirm the basic principles of equality and non-discrimination on the basis of age, and explained that responsibilities regarding the issue of ageing must be clarified to each state in order to create an effective framework for policymaking.

The next speaker was Louise Richardson, Vice President of AGE Platform Europe, which is an umbrella organization that brings together NGOs from across Europe that work on the rights and welfare of older persons. She argued that the best place to start for improving the way the world sees and treats older persons is by actively engaging with older people and asking them to voice their concerns. It is important to consult NGOs who are working on the ground, she said, in order to understand how fundamental rights are perceived and experienced by citizens in their everyday lives.

The final speaker of the day was the Honorable Susan Ryan, Australia’s Age Discrimination Commissioner and also a former member of the Australian Senate. She said that areas like online education and financial literacy should be addressed in order to help older people survive in the modern world. She outlined some interesting emerging education initiatives, e.g. one which

matches school students with seniors to assist older people to be proficient online. With regard to finances, she said that planning for retirement is essential the minute someone enters the working world. Battling stereotypes is also essential, to improve perceptions of older persons. Her website where people can advocate for older people online is at: <http://www.hreoc.gov.au/age-positive/index.html>.

Day 2. Panel on “Autonomy, Independent Living and Healthcare”



Panelists during “Panel 2: Autonomy, Independent Living and Healthcare”, from left to right: Nena Georgantzi, Amanda McRae, and Najat Makkaoui.

Najat Makkaoui, moderator of this panel, serves on the National Council of Human Rights in Morocco. Panelist Amanda McRae, a disability rights researcher and former Western Balkans researcher and Finberg Fellow at Human Rights Watch, raised the theme of restrictive drug regulations. She said that even though international law requires states to make narcotic drugs like morphine available for the treatment of pain while also preventing abuse, many countries have not struck an appropriate balance. The other issue she raised was the inadequate training of healthcare workers who provide palliative care to seniors; palliative care reforms must be made in order to make a difference in the lives of older people.

The second panelist was Horst Krumbach, Founder and CEO of the German nonprofit organization “Generationsbruecke Deutschland,” which translates into “Generation’s Bridge Germany.” The organization brings generations together in assisted living facilities and nursing homes through volunteer opportunities. He proposed that the rest of the European Union implement the core ideas of his organization in hospitals around the world, insuring that older people be treated with dignity and respect. One way to help older people is by creating a partnership between schools and hospitals and nursing homes, whereby students would be required to volunteer in those settings, and get academic credit. He noted that, “Inside every old person is a young person, wondering what the hell happened?”

The third panelist was Nena Georgantzi, legal and research officer at AGE Platform Europe, a European network of organizations that represent over 30 million older people in the continent. Economic crises in the European Union have forced many families to remove older relatives from nursing homes, which in turn puts them at risk for inadequate care, abuse, and limited autonomy because this is done without prior assessment of their needs. She suggested that the intersection between age and disability be taken into account for future policy-making because many older people do not consider themselves disabled.

Day 2. Panel on “Life in Dignity, Social Security and Access to Resources”

The Moderator of the panel was Louise Richardson. Panelist Anne-Mette Kjaer Hesselager, Head of the Section at the Division of Law and International at the Ministry of Social Affairs and Integration in Denmark, advocated for the importance of allocating resources such as health care to the ever-growing elderly population in the European Union.

Alejandro Morlacchetti stated that although social security is recognized throughout the international human rights framework, the UN should still consider the need to have clear standards. He suggested that a “binding instrument” be constructed in order to “advance the understanding of the implications of the right to social security for older persons.” The UN must also define clear standards in regards to age. He said the policies in place need to clarify what can be justified “by a legitimate aim and if the means of achieving that aim are appropriate, necessary and proportionate.”

Najat Mekkaoui discussed how several social security plans in the MENA (Middle East and North Africa) region face challenges in terms of “effectiveness, sustainability and governance”. She expressed dismay at how many people are left out of the social security system, yet in her native Morocco, there has been a new trend to expand pension and health coverage to reduce poverty and inequalities. Morocco has also initiated a new public strategy to help older persons. Such policy shifts need to be made to allow access to basic pension for older people. She agreed with other panelists that health services and education are crucial to the well-being of older persons.

— Submitted by **Lauren M. Berrill, IAAP UN Intern**

United for a Culture of Peace Through Interfaith Harmony: A special event at the UN



H.E. Mr. Vuk Jeremić (President of the 67th Session of the United Nations General Assembly), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and The Committee of Religious NGOs to the United Nations, held a special event titled “United for a Culture of Peace Through Interfaith Harmony” at the General Assembly Hall on 14 February 2013.

The speakers included Mr. Philippe Kridelka, Director of the UNESCO Liaison Office in New York, H.E. Ambassador Byrganym Aitimova of the Republic of Kazakhstan, H.E. Ambassador Hamid Al-Bayati of the Mission of Iraq, and Dr. Patrick Ho from China Energy Fund Committee, who commented on the Role of Interfaith Harmony in the Peaceful Settlement of Disputes.

The event included a moving *Symphony of Peace Prayers*, with prayers by religious leaders from the Indigenous, Bahai, Buddhist, Christian, Hindu, Humanist, Jain, Jewish, Muslim, Sikh, and Zoroastrian traditions. In addition, the Junior Four Chorus of the United Nations International School sang three songs: “*Shalom*,” “*Assalam Alaykum Wa Alayna/May I Be an Instrument of Peace*,” and “*Bwana Awabariki*.”



Symphony of Peace Prayers read by religious leaders

To close the three hour event, the elaborate World Peace Flag Ceremony was introduced by Mr. Hiroo Saionji, President of the Goi Peace Foundation and the World Peace Prayer Society. When each flag bearer came on stage, the audience joined together in saying “May peace be in (the country),” while also holding up the paper flag they received in their program. The final flag bearer was Mrs. Ban, wife of UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, who held the flag of the UN. Her respectable presence in the Hall was felt by all, and I had the opportunity to take a picture with her after the event.



Students and UN staff line up for the World Peace Flag Ceremony

Manhattan Multicultural Counseling (MMC), directed by IAAP Professional Affiliate Mahroo Moshari, was part of the Religious NGOs Planning Team. High school and college age students were recruited to attend this special event dedicated to peace between religions. Additionally, I and one of the MMC interns coordinated the flag bearers for the Flag Ceremony.



General Assembly Hall

Having the General Assembly full of guests from different cultures and religions—all dedicated to promoting a culture of peace in each country and religious communities—was inspiring and generated a feeling of hope. Flag bearers expressed appreciation for the honor of holding their

nation's flag in an important space. An MMC intern aptly described the addresses and the musical pieces in the program as "very memorable." Another intern, Zunaira, said that "being a part of the Interfaith Harmony event quite easily made me realize that I was part of a phenomenal project. The weeks of recruiting flag bearers for the World Peace Flag Ceremony was all worth it when I saw the several college students and UN staff members carry the flags of their respective countries on the stage of the UN GA. I was honored to be a part of this esteemed event and grateful for the opportunity to represent my country, Pakistan, at the Interfaith event at the United Nations." MMC director Moshari said that this gathering should be included in school assemblies and public gatherings among religious communities.

The event was streamed live on UN Web TV and is viewable at <http://webtv.un.org/meetings-events/watch/united-for-a-culture-of-peace-through-interfaith-harmony/2165451739001>. For the full program, see: www.unitedforacultureofpeace.info.

– submitted by Ya'arah Pinhas, IAAP UN DPI Youth Representative

Update from IAAP European UN Representatives: in Geneva and Vienna

Geneva: IAAP NGO Representatives Lichia Yiu and Raymond Saner participated in the 2012 Board Meeting of the United Nations Committee of Non-Governmental Organizations (CoNGO), where IAAP is a Board Member. CoNGO is a potential conduit for bringing IAAP's collective expertise and behavior/science dimension and know-how to the international development processes. Yiu and Saner have participated many activities involving monitoring the field of trade and development with an emphasis on international trade negotiations, aid effectiveness, supply chain analysis and human capital investment through lifelong learning.

These include:

- (1) Many recent published policy papers, e.g., "Plurilateral Agreements: Key to solving impasse of WTO/Doha Round and basis for future trade agreements within the WTO context"(CSEND Policy Brief Nr. 7, April 2012); "Inclusion of Aid for Trade in Trade Policy Reviews: Strengthening Value of Development Instruments for LDCs (and Developing Countries)" (GREAT Insights, Vol. 1 (6), August 2012); "Food Security in Africa: Trade Theory, Modern Realities and Provocative Considerations for Policymakers" (GREAT Insights, Vol. 1 (7), September 2012); and others accessible at <http://www.csend.org/csend-policy-briefs/item/310-csend-policy-briefs>.
- (2) In 2012, they organized two side events at UNCTAD XIII, held 21–26 April 2012 in Doha, Qatar, on "Linking human capital development with employability, competitiveness for sustainable trade, economic growth and social inclusion." The second side event was organized jointly with the Qatar Foundation. The focus was on ways to promote more efficient and effective use of education and training resources by linking education to employability as a means to alleviate youth unemployment. Both side events were very well attended by officials from Developing Countries, particularly from Africa, and some international organisations such as African Union and UNECA. A summary of the event is accessible at <http://www.csend.org/conferences/conferences/item/311-csend-side-events-at-unctad-xiii-21-2-april-2012-doha-qatar>
- (3) A roundtable organized on "Humanitarian Work Psychology: Emerging New Domain Knowledge", 4th May, 2012, Geneva, to explore the relevance and primacy in future research of this new topic, in conjunction with the book launch of "Humanitarian Work Psychology:

Alignment, Harmonisation and Cultural Competence” for which they contributed a chapter. In addition to their presentation on their chapter, others presenters included two editors from New Zealand and Ireland, on the purpose and objective of the book, to shed light on: how organizations like the United Nations, the World Bank, the World Health Organization, and the Red Cross can become more effective in their vital and laudable mission; how multinational corporations can contribute meaningfully to global issues like climate change, poverty reduction and equitable economic growth; and, what enables enterprises to grow and develop in challenging settings like the aftermath of a devastating Tsunami. A summary of the event is accessible at <http://www.csend.org/conferences/csend-dialogue-forum/item/312-humanitarian-work-psychology>

- (4) Collaboration in developing negotiation simulation for the Global Health Programme of the Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies, 20–22 June. The simulation is a multi-party negotiations which focused on the elaboration of guidelines for implementation of Article 13 of the Convention based on the WHO framework convention for tobacco control (2003).
- (5) Contact with an inter-governmental institution, the Global Forum on Migration & Development (GFMD), which will hold a High-Level Meeting in New York in 2013. Their evaluation of the GFMD process suggests including labor market issues, e.g., the effect of an aging society in Europe. This is an excellent potential avenue for inter-disciplinary scientific alliances between psychology, development economics, politics, sociology, and other stakeholders.

In addition, Raymond Saner organised a panel at the WTO Open Forum on 24–26 September 2012. The panel, on “Plurilateralism Against Multilateralism: A Multistakeholder Perspective” featured H.E. Mr Yonov Frederick Agah, Ambassador of Nigeria; Mr Peter Draper, Senior Research Fellow, South African Institute of International Affairs (SAIIA); Mr Stuart Harbinson, Former Permanent Representative of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region of China to the WTO and former Chef du Cabinet for the WTO DG; Mr Lu Xiankun, Counsellor, Head of Division, Permanent Mission of China to the WTO; Mr Nicholas Niggli, Former Chairman, WTO Committee on Government Procurement and Counsellor, Deputy Head of the WTO Division at the Permanent Mission of Switzerland to the WTO and the European Free Trade Association (EFTA); Dr Luzius Wasescha, Former Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Switzerland to the WTO and EFTA; and Professor Robert Wolfe, School of Policy Studies, Queen’s University, Canada.

Vienna: Dr. Wolfgang Beiglboeck was elected Vice President of CoNGO, and has met with the Chairpersons of the CoNGO Committees to discuss how CoNGO can enhance and support the work of NGOs in Vienna. In March 2013, he will represent IAAP at the next Commission on Narcotic Drugs, the central drug policy-making body of the UN and one of the functional commissions of ECOSOC, which will be reported in a future IAAP Bulletin.

– submitted by **Raymond Saner, Ph.D. and Lichia Yiu, IAAP NGO representatives to the UN, Geneva**

Other Activities of IAAP UN Team Members in NY

Mary O’Neill Berry, PhD, was a presenter at the 2013 annual conference of the British Psychological Society’s Division of Occupational Psychology, the equivalent of the American Psychological Association’s Division 14, Society of Industrial & Organizational Psychology (SIOP). At the conference, themed “Connecting and Contributing to Make a Difference,” Dr. Berry presented at a Roundtable called “Incentivising Inter-organisational Collaboration for a Safer, More Prosperous

World,” on the topic of the multi-stakeholder Girls’ Empowerment Programme in Lesotho, Africa, which focused on HIV/AIDS risk reduction and prevention as well as entrepreneurial training.

Judy Kuriansky, PhD, co-edited a special issue of the Journal of Ecopsychology, on Disaster and Change, in which she authored several articles, including “Gender and Natural Disaster: The Case of Men after the 2004 Asian Tsunami”; “Superstorm Sandy 2012: A Psychologist’s Personal Account and Experience of the Impact on Ecology and Emotions”; “A Model for Post-disaster Wellness Workshops: Preparing Individuals and Communities for Anniversary Reactions after Hurricane Katrina”; “Psychology at the United Nations: Advocacy and Contributions to Policy and Programming on the Global Agenda”; and “Can the Private Sector Help Heal the Planet?” co-authored with Daniel W. Bena, Senior Director of Sustainable Development, PepsiCo. She volunteered doing psychosocial first aid after Superstorm Sandy in the USA, and presented a talk about this at the Eastern Psychological Association meeting in NYC in March, 2013, as well as on experiences helping after other natural disasters, e.g. the earthquake in Haiti, tsunami/earthquake in Japan, and others. She also presented at EPA about International Psychology and student involvement at the United Nations which featured the DVD she co-produced. It includes profiles of many IAAP members and is available from co-producer Dr. Uwe Gielen at ugielen@sfc.edu. She was selected to be on the panel organized by the United Nations Academic Impact in association with the Permanent Mission of Bhutan to the UN to commemorate the International Day of Happiness on March 20th at UN headquarters in NY, along with other civil society members and UN Ambassadors, a report about which will be in the next Bulletin.

A report about the WHO Quality Rights Campaign, important for IAAP members to know about, can be accessed at: <http://www.humnews.com/humnews/2012/8/6/saving-the-world-from-madness-report.html>

– submitted by IAAP UN team members

Introduction of new IAAP UN representatives



Mahroo Moshari, newly appointed IAAP UN team Professional Affiliate

Newly appointed IAAP Professional Affiliate Mahroo Moshari is a Consultant on Education and Multicultural Mental Health Issues for the multicultural population in the New York City area. A psychotherapist, teacher, counselor, social worker, supervisor, and Senior Project Director at leading New York hospitals, mental health clinics, schools, universities, and social service agencies, she currently directs a unique summer youth program for ages 16–21 at the United Nations and in Manhattan. She has a degree in Psychology and Clinical Social Work from NYU and training in cross-cultural psychology at Columbia University Teachers College. A member of the UN NGO Committee on Human Rights and an executive board member of the NGO Committee on Mental Health, she was selected by the NYC Commission on Women’s Issues as one of 31 women who made a difference. She can be reached at mahrooo@yahoo.com.



Newly appointed IAAP UN DPI Youth Representative Ya'arah Pinhas

Newly appointed Youth Representative to the Department of Public Information, Ya’arah Pinhas, is a graduate of Columbia University and the Jewish Theological Seminary and the Project Coordinator for Manhattan Multicultural Counseling’s Youth Programs.