

United Nations Association

Westminster Branch

Campaigning for a strong, credible and effective UN



Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on 23 January 2013 in Room 18, House of Commons

The Chair, David Wardrop, welcomed members to the AGM and confirmed that the meeting was quorate.

1. Apologies for absence: Joint Presidents and Joint Vice-Presidents, William Say and Patricia Rogers.

2. Minutes of the AGM held on 12 December 2011: These were agreed to be a true record with the addition of noting the apologies of Elizabeth Gordon. The Chair reported that the AGM was delayed through giving precedence to the important meeting on human rights held in November. It is hoped future AGMs can be held each Summer, a few months after the end of the financial year (31 March).

3. Matters arising: There was none.

4. Annual Report 2011-12: The Chair spoke briefly to the Report, previously circulated, and highlighted some of the events and activities that had taken place since the last AGM such as the Dag Hammarskjold 50th Anniversary lecture hosted by the Swedish Embassy which had attracted 12 speakers from 7 countries. The *We the Peoples* Film Festival and the UN Peacekeepers Day ceremony and conference had also continued to go from strength and strength.

The meeting noted with sadness the passing of one of its Vice-Presidents, Elizabeth MacKeith, at the age of 102. An appreciation of her life is posted in the website News section (25 January 2012).

5. Presentation of the Accounts 2011-12

The Chair presented the accounts in the absence of the Treasurer. The branch had benefited from a £10k grant from Land Rover for the UN Peacekeeper Day event, freeing up branch funds to support a number of additional projects. This was further assisted by the branch's change of investment policy resulting in better interest returns. The Branch had a surplus for year-end 31 March 2012 of £1389.38 and net assets of 74,196.03.

After questions from members, the Annual Report and Accounts were adopted.

6. Appointment of Auditor for the year 2012-13

Stuart Lever, Auditor for three years, had indicated a wish to step down owing to advancing years. It was agreed that the Branch should ask the Westminster Young Professionals whether they could find a replacement. The Chair agreed to write to Stuart Lever, thanking him for his kind guidance.

7. Elections: The following were elected nemcon

Joint Presidents: Baroness Cox of Queensbury, Lord Judd of Portsea and Lord Lester of Herne Hill QC

Joint Vice-Presidents: Rt Hon Jeremy Thorpe PC, Juliet Colman, Ben Whitaker and HH Prince Mohsin Ali Khan

Chair: David Wardrop

Vice-Chair: Paul Mrazek

Hon Secretary: Vivienne Eka

Hon Treasurer: George Nimfour

Executive Committee: Rudi Albesa, Elizabeth Gordon, Catherine Pluygers, William Say, Ludre Stevens, Perri Mahmood, Angela Viano and Kishan Manocha.

Andrea Coore was invited to join the next meeting of the Executive Committee as an Observer.

Co-options would be considered at the first meeting of the new Executive Committee.

8. 2012-2013 programme

David Wardrop highlighted some forthcoming branch events. These included

- * the 2012-13 Film Festival,
- * the proposed launch of the *Sport for Peace* worldwide database project at the Royal Geographic Society on 29 January. This followed on work from Westminster UNA's promotion of the Olympic Truce which had attracted 11,000 supporters from 93 countries including the Vatican,
- * the 11th Ruth Steinkraus-Cohen International Law Lecture "*The UN and Torture Prevention: theory and practice*" to be given by Prof Malcolm Evans on 4 February,
- * the UN Peace Keepers Day Conference on 22nd May,
- * the UNA Westminster Study Tour to legal centres in Europe (1-8 June).

Details of these events can be found on the UNA Westminster website.

Paul Mrazek, Vice-Chairman, reminded the meeting that the Branch also runs a programme of speaker events usually in the Houses of Parliament and members' suggestions for new themes and topics were always welcome.

9. Any Other Business: Keith Hindell noted that the family of Elizabeth MacKeith had offered to donate the branch two pictures (the UN Building, New York and the Palais de Nations, Geneva), originally a gift to her from the late Gordon Evans. It was agreed that the Chair would collect these and display them at the next Westminster branch meeting. A decision would then be made as to their future.

The Chair invited members to support the UNA Policy Conference on 27 April at Friends House, Euston. He believed that it was important for members to have their say on the direction of UNA's national policy agenda.

The meeting closed at 6.45pm.

The Chair then handed over to Ludre Stevens, Chair of Westminster UNA Young Professionals for their public meeting titled "*Is the only answer to the Iranian question a Military One?*" The speakers were Heather Blake, *Reporters without borders*, and Dr Dan Plesch, *Director of the Centre for International Studies and Diplomacy at SOAS*.