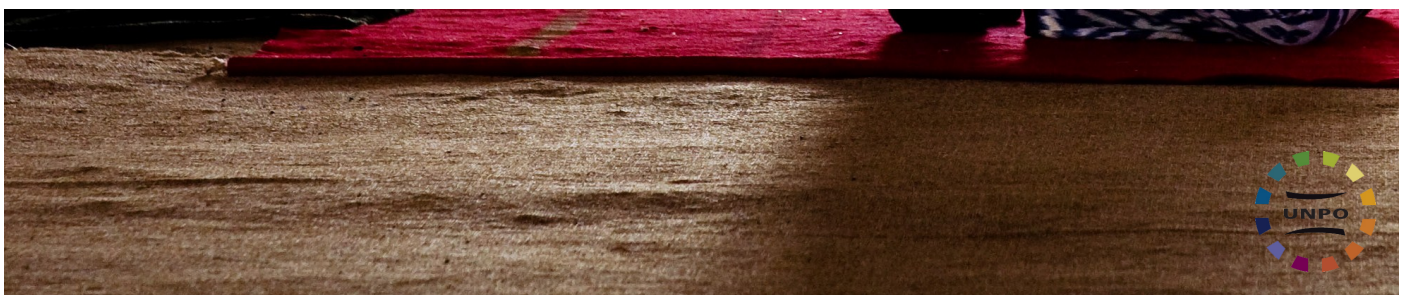




UNPO 20th Anniversary Publication

Twenty Years of Promoting
Nonviolence, Human Rights, and
Self Determination





UNPO 20th Anniversary

Publication

Twenty Years of Promoting
Nonviolence, Human Rights and
Self Determination

11 February 1991—11 February 2011

UNREPRESENTED NATIONS AND PEOPLES ORGANIZATION PRESS

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The Unrepresented Nations and Peoples Organization (UNPO) is an international and democratic membership organization. Its Members are indigenous peoples, minorities, and unrecognized territories who have joined together to protect and promote their human and cultural rights and to find nonviolent solutions to conflicts which affect them.

UNPO is dedicated to the five principles acknowledged in its Covenant: nonviolence, human rights, self-determination and democracy, environmental protection, and tolerance. The organization is headquartered in The Hague, the Netherlands with an advocacy office in Brussels, Belgium and representation in Geneva, Switzerland.

Form more information please visit our website at www.unpo.org

*Front cover photograph: Man kneels
in prayer, Ogaden Region, Ethiopia.*

Photo credit: Freddy Hagan





UNPO 20th Anniversary Publication

Twenty Years of Promoting Nonviolence, Human Rights, and Self Determination

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UNPO GENERAL SECRETARY MR. MARINO BUSDACHIN

The Unrepresented Nations and Peoples Organization (UNPO) is undoubtedly one of the most original and articulate organizations around the world. Although UNPO's mere existence has been a challenge, the international community has repeatedly highlighted the need for organizations that give marginalized nations and peoples a global voice. UNPO is dedicated to serving that need.



Top left: 1997 General Assembly, Estonia; Bottom left: Children in West Balochistan, Iran *photo credit: Behzad Arta*; Right: UNPO Batwa Mission, 2010

In the two decades since UNPO committed itself to the protection and promotion of human rights, non-violence and self-determination, the world has become an increasingly cruel and violent place. Genocide and terrorism have become the new norm in destabilized regions and represent a continued threat to achieving peace and prosperity worldwide.

As the international community focuses on questions regarding the implementation of the United Nations (UN) Charter, UNPO strongly urges world leaders to underscore respect for human rights and the right to self-determination as the Charter is developed and implemented. To this point, these fundamental rights warrant more emphasis in the regulation of recently established states *and* major powers. Steadfast in its commitment to the preservation of these rights, UNPO continues to challenge international bodies that have turned a blind eye to the

systemic and blatant disregard for the fundamental rights of all people, regardless of ethnicity, religion or economic capacity.

Inspired by the political activism of Mahatma Gandhi, Martin Luther King, H.H. Dalai Lama, and Ken Saro Wiva — executed while serving as UNPO's Vice President — UNPO is unique in its approach to international activism. Our membership is comprised of fifty-seven dynamic and vibrant communities, whose perspectives are an integral part of any and all global discussions.

With our guidance, many of our Members continue to pass milestones in their struggle for basic human rights. However, others continue to suffer in violent environments and under repressive regimes. Using models of activism that produce positive results, the organization remains committed to uniting these communities under the banner of non-violence. UNPO is proud to partner with the Interna-



Baloch child drinks from an often empty tap,
West Balochistan, Iran *photo credit: Behzad
Arta*

tional Campaign for Tibet, Taiwan Foundation for Democracy and the Nonviolent Radical Party as we aim to prevent use of violence and rid the world of human rights abuse.

Since its establishment in 1991, UNPO has risen to meet the successive, new and different challenges presented by the rapidly evolving world. In 2006, the UNPO Covenant was amended to reflect this new international landscape and ensure that the organization could effectively respond to new types of conflict. UNPO's progressive vision for the forthcoming decade aims to affirm democracy as a fundamental human right, implement human, civil and political rights worldwide, to uphold the universal right to autonomy, federalism and self-determination and to advance nonviolent methodologies as an effective alternative to a violence.

While the organization has seen great success in the last twenty years, ethnic and religious marginalization persists. Until the international community has safeguarded the rights of the entire world population, UNPO will continue to serve those nations and peoples without a global voice.

*Marino Busdachin
General Secretary*

HIS HOLINESS THE DALAI LAMA



THE DALAI LAMA

MESSAGE

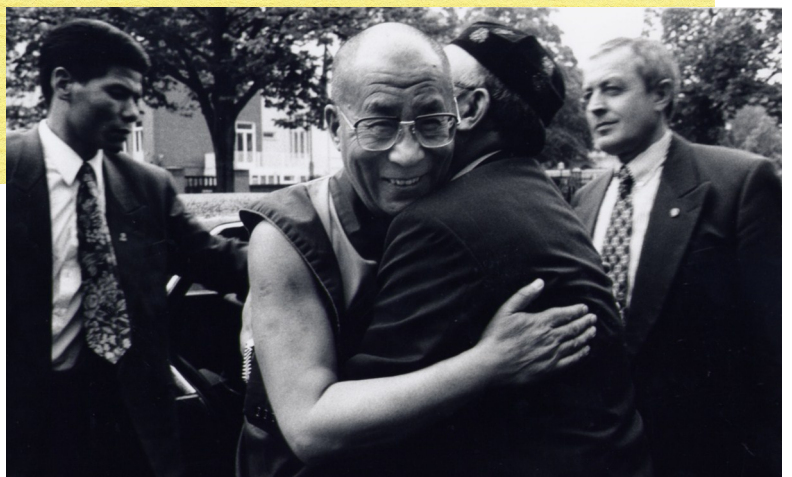
I am happy to know that the Unrepresented Nations & Peoples' Organization (UNPO) is celebrating its 20th anniversary this year. During these years it has endeavored to speak on behalf of those peoples and nations, particularly indigenous and minorities some of whose voices are seldom heard. Communities that were initial members of UNPO, like East Timor and Kosovo are enjoying their country's freedom.

I commend the UNPO members for their commitment to their principles of nonviolence, human rights, democracy and self-determination, environmental protection, and tolerance to secure their legitimate rights.

I hope your Organization continues to work towards fulfilling the aspirations of unrepresented peoples and nations wherever they are, and send you my prayers and good wishes.

20 January 2011

His Holiness the Dalai Lama visits
The Hague, the Netherlands, 1994



SNAPSHOT

YEAR ESTABLISHED

1991

OFFICES

UNPO Secretariat, The Hague, the Netherlands

UNPO Advocacy, Brussels, Belgium

GENERAL SECRETARY

Marino Busdachin

CURRENT MEMBERSHIP

Fifty Three Nations and Peoples

MISSION STATEMENT

In today's world where over 90 percent of conflicts are intra-state, UNPO has been established to fill this gap, providing an international forum through which its Members can become effective participants and contributors to the international community. In an increasingly interdependent world it is ever more important that those who continue to be denied their rights or remain excluded be given an opportunity to present their case. UNPO works therefore to address the consequences of marginalization, working with its Members to promote their democratic causes, to provide information, and to articulate creative and non-violent strategies for progress. Above all however, UNPO works to ensure their voices are heard.

UNPO PRESIDENT, MR. NGAWANG CHOEPHEL



On behalf of UNPO's 53 Members, I send my congratulations on the 20th Anniversary of the organization. This anniversary marks a significant achievement in the struggle to protect and uphold universal human rights despite new trials brought by an increasingly unstable world.

In the course of twenty years, UNPO has contributed to the realization of sustainable political solutions to many of its Members, including Aceh, Bougainville, East Timor, Kosova, Abkhazia and Zanzibar. At the same time, the

organization has been instrumental in alerting the international community to new situations like those in Somaliland and amongst the Khmer Krom, Hmong and Montagnard populations.

As we face the challenges of a new decade, the UNPO Presidency believes that a responsible and substantive contribution by its Members to uphold the core principles of our organization will make the organization more effective in achieving an end to the gross and systematic violations of human rights and fundamental freedoms inflicted upon people around the world.

We must now strengthen UNPO's global network by cultivating a closer relationship amongst our Members in order to foster a comprehensive understanding of our shared struggle for freedom.

On behalf of UNPO's Members, on this

occasion of the 20th Anniversary, we once again pledge to the world our total commitment to the principles of non-violence, human rights, self-determination, reconciliation and environmental protection.

Happy 20th Anniversary!

Ngawang Choephel
President

Ogaden woman in traditional dress,
photo credit: Freddy Hagan.



A VISION FOR PEACE, HUMAN RIGHTS AND SELF-DETERMINATION

On 11 February 1991, representatives of 15 nations and peoples¹ came together at the seat of international law, the Peace Palace in The Hague, with a revolutionary idea. Representing occupied nations, indigenous peoples, minorities and other vulnerable or disenfranchised populations, their aim was to create an international forum where unrepresented nations and peoples could voice their legitimate grievances. In pursuit of peace for their peoples and respect for universal human rights, these representatives joined together on the steps of the International Court of Justice in a pact for world peace. The result of this meeting was the establishment of the Unrepresented Nations and Peoples Organization (UNPO), a body whose existence is as crucial today as it was twenty years ago.

The founders of UNPO were engaged in a common struggle to preserve their cultural identities, protect the basic human rights of their peoples and advocate for a rights-based approach to international relations. The primary objective of these representatives was to regain international recognition of their communities as active participants in global politics. Too often, these populations faced extermination at the hands of colonizing powers and subsequent invisibility in international institutions. Rather than accepting this fate, UNPO Members came together to secure the right to self-determination for all peoples. As emphasized in its Covenant, UNPO is not an organization for unrepresented peoples; it is an organization of these peoples, which serves as a forum for sharing experiences and developing nonviolent strategies to productively address complex challenges.



Right: UNPO General
Assembly, 1995.
Opposite: Founding
Members of UNPO,
February 1991.



MR. HARRY van BOMMEL,
MEMBER OF THE DUTCH PARLIAMENT

UNPO provides the necessary assistance to peoples without a voice in international organizations such as the UN and the EU. In my parliamentary activities, I work closely with UNPO to serve the interests of these peoples. The Kurds, Uyghurs, Tibetans and all other unrepresented peoples find their way to UNPO and through this organization they can be heard. Their fundamental freedoms are often neglected in their country of origin. I see it as my mission to support their struggle for freedom and respect. Human rights are universal and the UN Declaration of Human Rights provides a solid basis for this struggle. Together with UNPO I wish to promote these rights wherever and whenever needed.

Harry van Bommel

ABOUT UNPO

CONTEXT

Following the fall of the Berlin Wall and the effective end of the Cold War, UNPO's establishment represented an important milestone in the emerging global human rights movement. The rapid and successive development of former Soviet states into independent nations gave rise to a new sentiment in international relations, one that focused less on ideological distinctions and more on ethnic and religious divisions. UNPO was thus created to represent the increasing number of peoples disenfranchised by the emerging nation-state structure. Reporting on the establishment of UNPO, Sarah Lambert observed that "[t]he roll-call of founding Members embraces most of the world's flashpoints and conjures up powerful images of peoples that one thought belonged to another era."² The foundation of this organization is based in UNPO's longstanding commitment to unveiling global repression and giving forgotten communities a stake in international fora.

Before the founding Members signed the organization's Covenant into practice, UNPO's mission attracted global attention and gained recognition as a groundbreaking parallel political experiment in global governance. However, UNPO's Membership wanted to assure the world that it was not creating a coalition to incite further conflict. The aim of the organization was, and remains, to secure inclusion of its Members in the United Nations (UN) as equals. As emphasized in the Preamble to UNPO's Covenant, the organization is not intended to create an alliance of participating Nations and Peoples against established States or against any individual State or groups of States. Rather, as Founding Member Menelzos Tzelios said, "this organization gives us and many other nations and peoples a chance to express our feelings, to voice our concerns. Other international organizations are not open to us. This gives us hope."³ Two decades later, indigenous peoples, ethnic minorities and unrecognized peoples continue to approach UNPO so that they too may share in this hope.

Founded by just fifteen groups, the organization has experienced astounding growth in the last twenty years and currently boasts 53 official Members. After more than two decades of work in global politics, UNPO has seen a number of successes. Chief among them is the admittance of six Members to the UN: Estonia, Latvia, Armenia, Georgia, Palau and East Timor (Timor-Leste). Despite these achievements, marginalization and disenfranchisement persist, and therefore UNPO must continue to confront the problems which it was founded to combat.

The driving force behind UNPO's continued existence is summarized by its founding General Secretary Michael van Walt van Praag, "I find it absolutely unbelievable that people like Tibetans, the Kurds and the elected leaders of Burma are not included in international discussions about their own fates. Each nation should have the right to decide its own destiny and to manage its own environment."⁴

PROMOTING NON-VIOLENCE AND SELF-DETERMINATION

The post-Cold War world saw the emergence of increasingly violent and more widespread conflict, as ethnic disagreements replaced concentrated ideological disputes as the main motivation behind outbreaks of aggression. As this transition occurred, a newly-formed UNPO dedicated its resources to the prevention of violence and the peaceful resolution of conflicts.

UNPO's current methodological structure calls for the organization to work with Members to identify instances of increased instability in a region and respond by reducing the possibility of violence through preventive practices and diplomatic efforts. Because UNPO is a grassroots organization, it maintains close contact with Members, who in turn have direct lines of communication with the peoples they represent. This allows the organization to gather timely and vital information about emerging conflicts. UNPO is also a global movement and is therefore able to disseminate this vital information to international capitals and centers for conflict resolution.

Due to its access to a spectrum of stakeholders in any conflict, UNPO is able to act as both a liaison of information *and* peaceful discussion. Recognizing the importance of open and direct communication in preventive diplomacy, UNPO facilitates meetings between its Members and representatives of state governments, international organizations, NGO's and the media. Combined, these actions comprise UNPO's early warning and action system which encourages rapid global action and supplements the work of international bodies that lack either the breadth or strength necessary to anticipate and act on crises in a timely manner. Emergen-



UNPO members stand with their flags, 1995 General Assembly.

cy alerts in Chechnya, Ogoni (Nigeria), East Timor, Kosova and Aceh are examples of the success of this system. As situations in these regions developed, UNPO was able to provide ample warning prior to the outbreak of severe violence and loss of life. Unfortunately, UNPO's warnings sometimes go unheeded by the international community, signifying the continued need for organizations like UNPO to act as a voice for the voiceless.

In support of this early warning and action program, UNPO undertakes field missions to regions of conflict. Such missions provide important third party mediation and assistance to conflict resolution mechanisms, promoting de-escalation of emerging conflicts while advocating for sustainable and long term solutions. During and subsequent to mediation, UNPO encourages the democratization of governance and the respect for human rights. In addition to mediation activities, UNPO also conducts election monitoring and fact-finding missions to observe the progress of our Members and provide the international community with comprehensive, firsthand information about indigenous and unrepresented communities. The organization's field work operates in tandem with efforts by international NGO's and the UN.

To encourage nonviolent approaches to rights suppression, UNPO suggests alternative avenues for Members to secure fundamental freedoms through programming aimed at capacity-building. The organization offers training programs which emphasize activism over aggression and educate participants in interactive dialogue and effective problem-solving. When these practices are utilized but met with violent repression, UNPO serves as a witness and advocate, protecting vulnerable peoples by bringing these instances to the attention of the international community and bringing international pressure to bear on the offending parties.

The promotion of self-determination is another important part of UNPO's approach to peace activism. While international law recognizes the right of nations to freely determine their own form of governance and political representation, this legal principle is silent on what constitutes a nation, and how nations should go about making such decisions. As a result, the concept of self-determination has also been inconsistently and ambiguously interpreted within the realm of international power politics and international law.⁵ UNPO's perspective on this international discussion is that all peoples have the right to self-determination, and that only through the recognition of this right can stability be established.

When Michael van Walt van Praag became the first foreigner to be granted a visa to Estonia as an independent nation, he commented on the general causes of conflict and the possible remedies for peace. He argued that instability is not a result of movements for freedom but is rather caused by long periods of oppression to which members of those movements have been subjected. UNPO believes that stability requires that individual nations and peoples be allowed to develop varying forms of self-determination. When such voluntary processes are denied, instability becomes a normative feature of the political environment. Van Walt van Praag observes, "we must move away from the misguided view of stability premised on immediate or short-term economic and political considerations to a long-term perspective which will ensure the peaceful co-existence of all peoples. Universal recognition and support for peoples right to self-determination is the cornerstone of a truly peaceful and stable world."⁶ Based on van Walt van Praag's view of the underpinnings of conflict, UNPO strongly believes that lasting stability is only possi-

Opposite: Ogoni Protest in the Niger Delta, November 2007.

ble where equality, free choice and mutual benefit underlie the relations among the world's peoples.

It should be noted that contrary to popular perception, self-determination does not necessarily imply secession, separate nationhood, or even autonomy; this term simply refers to the right of all peoples to freely determine their political status and freely pursue their economic, social and cultural development. The exercise of this right can result in a variety of outcomes, ranging from political independence to full integration within an existing state.

In recognition of UNPO's work with and for unrepresented nations and peoples, the organization has received the 1991 Tolerance Award, 1992 Social Innovation Award (The Body Shop), 1998 Petra Kelly Peace Award (Heinrich Böll Foundation) and was nominated for a Nobel Peace Prize in 1993 and the Right to Livelihood Award in 1994.



HOW UNPO WORKS

UNPO provides an path to advocacy on the international stage for nations and peoples that have been excluded from regulatory bodies. UNPO interacts with its Members through both regional and international mechanisms. The organization's activities include conflict resolution, assistance in and advocacy of strategic planning for peace and justice efforts and election and referendum monitoring in democracy building.

UNPO augments its indigenous advocacy activities by developing and leading training programs in diplomacy, legal activism and consultation, human rights protection and promotion, democratic principles and practice, media relations and nonviolent methodologies. The skills developed and strategies learned in such trainings are used by participants to enhance the effectiveness and visibility of regional movements.

Members, with assistance and support provided by UNPO, engage in the vast and complex processes of the UN and the European Parliament. Through these and other efforts, Mem-

bers develop the diplomatic and negotiation skills necessary to navigate the complex international fora.

UNPO provides a unique perspective to the global discussion. As a core channel of communication between the peoples in their communities and global civil society, UNPO's secretariat aims to keep international organizations, governments, NGO's and the media informed of member activities. Additionally, UNPO serves as a catalyst for conflict resolution, and is involved on the ground, serving as an intermediary between parties in conflict. The organization is uniquely capable of carrying out this role as "it has the trust and confidence of its Member nations and peoples and, at the same time, it enjoys a level of recognition in the international community which provides access to expertise and credibility."⁷



Opposite: UNPO Mission to Hawaii, 1996
 Below: Female Teacher in Ogaden, photo credit:
 Freddy Hagen



Endnotes

- (1) Present at this founding meeting were representatives from Tibet, Taiwan, Kurdistan, East Turkestan, Latvia, Tatarstan, Palau (Belau), Australian Aboriginals, Cordillera, West Papua, Estonia, Armenia, Georgia, the Greek Minority in Albania and the Crimean Tatars.
- (2) Lambert, Sarah. "World's minorities seek a voice," *The Independent*, 7 August 1991, p. 16.
- (3) De Lama, George. "Stateless peoples seek to state their cause," *Chicago Tribune*, 14 February, 1993, p. 23
- (4) Greenwald, Jeff "Getting the World to Listen," *Los Angeles Times*, 23 April 1992, p. E1, E6.
- (5) Valpy, Fitzgerald, Frances Stewart and Rajesh Venugopal (2006). *Globalization, Self-Determination and Violent Conflict* Palgrave Macmillan. 2006, Hampshire. p. 3.
- (6) The Unrepresented Nations and Peoples Organization, *Unrepresented Nations and Peoples Organization: The First Decade*, (The Netherlands: Drukkerij Brummelkamp, 2001), p. 9.
- (7) The Unrepresented Nations and Peoples Organization, *Unrepresented Nations and Peoples Organization: The First*

Decade, (The Netherlands: Drukkerij Brummelkamp, 2001), p. 7

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- The Unrepresented Nations and Peoples Organization, *Unrepresented Nations and Peoples Organization: The First Decade*, (The Netherlands: Drukkerij Brummelkamp, 2001), p. 9.
- "Unrepresented Peoples Plan to Set Up Alternative U.N.," *The Wall Street Journal Europe*, February 5, 1991.

TIMELINE



1991



1992



1994

1993

UNPO Founding Assembly
and Second General As-
sembly (GA)

- Mission to Kosova
- Mission to Abkhazia,
Georgia and the
Northern Caucuses

- Third GA, The Hague
- Mission to Abkhazia
and Georgia
- Report on the Human
Rights Situation in the
Cordillera, the Philip-
pines
- Report on the Nation-
al and Human Rights
Situation of the Alba-
nians in Kosova

- Report on Trial of
Leaders of Greek Mi-
nority in Albanian
- Mission to Greek Mi-
nority in Albania
- Mission to Taiwan



1995



1997



1998

1996

- Fourth GA, The Hague
- Report on Yakutsk, Sakha Republic
- Report on Republic of Ingushetia and Chechen Republic of Ichkeria
- Mission to Rwanda (Batwa)
- Mission to Ogoniland
- Mission to Zanzibar

- Mission to Abkhazia/Georgia
- Mission to the Sakha Republic (Yakutia)
- Mission to Sanjak
- Mission to Hawaii

- Fifth GA, Otteppaa, Estonia
- Mission to Chechen Republic Ichkeria for Presidential & Primary Elections
- Mission to Tibet
- Report on Peace Action Council Mission to Tanzania

- Barcelona UNESCO Conference, 'The Implementation of the Right to Self-Determination as a Contribution to Conflict Prevention'

TIMELINE, PART II



1999

Universal Declaration on the Rights of People drafted after three meetings; adopted at Seventh GA

2000

- Ten Years of UNPO and the Rights of Peoples; conference organized in Tallinn, Estonia

2001

- Sixth GA, Tallinn, Estonia
- Report on Taiwan's Legislative Yuan and Magistrate Elections

2002

Round Table Discussion on Decolonization held at Secretariat office with the participation of ten UNPO Members

2003



2006

2005

2004

UN Working Group on Indigenous Populations, 21st Session

- UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, 3rd Session
- UN Working Group on Indigenous Populations, 22nd Session

- UN Commission on Human Rights, 61st Session
- UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, 4th Session
- Seventh GA, The Hague
- Election Monitoring Mission to Zanzibar
- Conference on "Peace, Stability and Security in East Asia: The Question of China—Taiwan," The Hague

- UN Commission on Human Rights, 62nd Session
- UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, 5th Session
- UN Working Group on Indigenous Populations, 24th Session
- UN Human Rights Council, 1st Session
- Eighth GA, Taipei, Taiwan

TIMELINE, PART III



2007

2008

2009
cont.

2009

- UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, 6th Session
- UN Human Rights Council, 5th Session
- Democracy and Human Rights, Leadership Seminar for Uyghurs
- International Day of Non-violence
- Iraqi Turkmen: The Human Rights Situation and Crisis in Kirkuk, European Parliament
- UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, 7th Session
- UN Human Rights Council, 6th Session
- Speak Out! Human Rights Training, The Hague
- De Facto States Conference, European Parliament
- Kirkuk Problem and Article 140: Defining Alternatives, European Parliament
- Earth Exploitation and Survival Campaign
- Iraqi Provincial Elections Observation Mission, Iraq
- Human Rights and the Question of Democratization and Federalism in Iran, European Parliament
- Peace & Security and the de facto State Conference, European Parliament
- East Turkestan: 60 Years Under the PRC, Washington, D.C., USA
- UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, 7th Session
- Promoting a Culture of Non-Violence with Mr. Arun Gandhi, The Hague
- 5th Session of the UPR Working Group, UN Human Rights Council, demonstration outside UN with Khmer Krom.
- Balochistan Side Event at 11th Session of the UN Human Rights Council
- Liberation from the Legacy of Colonialism: An Indigenous Voice for Self-Determination in Asia-Pacific, Khmer Krom Conference, Paris



2009
cont.

2009
cont.

- Uyghur Delegation Meeting at the European Parliament following July 5 unrest in Urumqi
- Kurdistan Election Monitoring Mission
- World Uyghur Congress Hearing in the European Parliament
- Visit to Mapucheland, Chile
- 2nd session of the Forum on Minority Issues
- 5th Parliamentary Assembly on Tibet, Rome
- International Day of Human Rights event, Manifesto presented to Dutch Parliament, The Hague
- Tibet: 'Autonomy v Independence' Turin, Italy
- Rebiya Kadeer visit to the Netherlands

TIMELINE, PART IV



2010
cont.

2010
cont.

2010

- Visit to Ogoniland, Human Rights Training and Field Visits, Nigeria
- 8th Presidency, Rome. Conference on the principle of *non-refoulement*
- 7th Session of the Working Group on the UPR – Iran under review. Lobbying Mission and parallel event
- 76th session on the Convention for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, Cambodia
- Conference on human rights in Pakistan, demonstration, UN, Geneva

- Conference on Dialogue in the Situation of Human Rights of Minorities in South Asia, UN, Geneva
- Interventions during the 13th Session of the Human Rights Council
- Hearing on Human Rights in Ogaden, European Parliament
- Crimean Tatar Conference, European Parliament
- Movies That Matter Film Festival- Rebiya Kadeer, The Hague
- UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues New York

- Khmer Krom Youth Conference, Philadelphia
- Uyghur Training and Conference, European Parliament
- Democratic Movement in Iran: Pitfalls and Potential, Italian Parliament, Rome
- Hearing at the Italian Senate on minorities in Iran, Rome
- Speak Out! Indigenous Voices, Human Rights Training for Youth, The Hague
- UNPO Training on Rights and Activism for Degar-Montagnard Members, South Carolina, USA

2010
cont.



2011

- UNPO “Digital Democracy” Side Event at 15th Session of UN Human Rights Council, UN, Geneva
- CEDAW Pre-Sessional Working Group: Ethiopia, UN, Geneva
- CAT review of Ethiopia, UN, Geneva
- Gilgit-Baltistan Conference, Brussels
- 15th Anniversary of the Execution of former UNPO Vice Chair, Ken Saro Wiwa, public event and commemorative concert, The Hague
- Working visit to investigate situation of the Batwa, Rwanda
- UNPO Delegation to the UN Forum on Minority Issues, Geneva
- Visit to Mapucheland, Chile
- Rebiya Kadeer visit to Europe; meetings in Dutch and European Parliaments
- 10th Session of the UPR Working Group, Rwanda
- Kashgar conference, European Parliament,

FORMER UNPO GENERAL SECRETARY MR. ERKIN ALPTEKIN



As a Uyghur from East Turkestan, I was thrilled when the idea was put forward to create an organization uniting peoples and nations not represented in the United Nations (UN) during a conference held in London in 1990. This idea led to the foundation of the Unrepresented Nations and Peoples Organization (UNPO) in 1991. Our goal was to offer a platform to those peoples that do not have the opportunity to be part of the established international organizations.

It is estimated that there are 6,500 peoples and ethnic groups in the world of which less than 200 are represented in the UN. Hence the necessity of providing marginalized peoples with a framework enabling them to help each other. UNPO gives a voice to those who otherwise would never have one.

Some of our Members want full recog-

nition in the form of a sovereign and independent state. Others merely wish for respect of their fundamental rights, especially in the cultural domain. It is the spirit of mutual respect, where no one group tries to impose its objectives on the others, that allows peoples to co-exist within UNPO. UNPO is, above all, a platform that each of us use to promote our issues. We share the same pillow, even though we have different dreams.

Our Members adhere to non-violence, respect for human rights, self-determination, democracy, and mutual tolerance. The criteria of non-violence may seem contradictory with the reality that some of our Members were engaged in armed struggles. This is often purely in self-defense, in order to survive as a people. I think our position can be summarized as follows: violence is unacceptable as long as there are ways of making ourselves heard. Wherever the possibility exists, peoples should reaffirm their existence and pursue their objectives through peaceful ways of expression.

In its 20th year of existence, UNPO has accomplished much: the voices of more than 70 peoples are now heard.

International recognition of UNPO as a legitimate forum where peoples can address problems and open dialogue with governments is growing. However, many challenges still lie ahead. Everywhere states are intensifying their politics of oppression, cultural assimilation and economic exploitation by force. Perhaps the greatest threat to unrepresented peoples around the world is loss of identity. We all have different dreams but our mutual objective is to see our own culture and uniqueness flourish in our homelands. This wish is the same for Uyghurs, Tibetans and the Inner Mongols, for the Mapuche of Chile, the Australian Aborigines, and the Batwa of Rwanda.

As one of the forefathers of the idea of UNPO, its former vice chairman and former interim General Secretary, I would like to reiterate my commitment to our organization. I am sure that UNPO will lead us into a new and brighter millennium and will continue to strive for the peaceful realization of our dreams.

Erkin Alptekin



HIS HOLINESS THE DALAI LAMA VISITS THE UNPO SECRETARIAT IN THE HAGUE, 2009

In June 2009, His Holiness the Dalai Lama visited the Netherlands as part of a diplomatic and spiritual tour of Europe. UNPO was able to arrange an audience with His Holiness and discuss UNPO's recent advocacy on behalf of Tibet. During his visit, His Holiness encouraged UNPO to engage in more nonviolence training and to focus efforts in Africa, with the hope that the seeds of peace be planted in the minds of the new African generation. As a messenger of peace and self-determination, His Holiness the Dalai Lama continues to inspire UNPO and its mission to promote and preserve the tenets of nonviolence.

UNPO ACTIVITIES

UNPO AT THE UNITED NATIONS

Drawing attention to issues affecting marginalized groups at the United Nations (UN) has been a central focus of UNPO's work over the past twenty years. The aim of the organization is to ensure that UNPO Members are able to effectively access and take part in discussions within the international bodies mandated to protect their rights. Members have participated in various sessions of the Human Rights Council, the UN Forum on Minority Issues and the UN Permanent Forum for Indigenous Issues. UNPO has also continued its participation in the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) process, an initiative launched in 2008 to review the human rights records of UN Member States. Expanding its reach to consider Treaty Body mechanisms, UNPO has also participated in the Committee for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination and the Committee for the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women, the Committee Against Torture and the Human Rights Committee. Over the past two decades the organization has increased its capacity to help facilitate discussion on minority issues in the international arena.

UNIVERSAL PERIODIC REVIEW PROCESS

The UPR is a state-driven process involving the review of the human rights records of all 192 UN Member States once every four years. UNPO has been contributing to the UPR since its inception, having submitted reports to be considered as part of the reviews of Argentina, Bangladesh, Burma (Myanmar), Cambodia, Cameroon, Chile, China, Ethiopia, Indonesia, Iran, Kenya, Nepal, Nigeria, Pakistan, Philippines, Romania, Rwanda, South Africa, Ukraine and Vietnam. If utilized, reports will be incorporated into a Joint Stakeholders Report, which contains collective contributions from NGO's on human rights concerns and is subsequently presented to the state under review. The organization is frequently and increasingly cited in UPR reports, demonstrating not only a marked improvement in UNPO's capacity and influence, but also the value of the information brought to light by UNPO. The organization also attends sessions to advocate for these issues to be included on the UN agenda and arranges for Members to attend, allowing them to observe the process and draw attention to important issues.

UN PERMANENT FORUM ON INDIGENOUS ISSUES

The United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (UNPFII) is an advisory body to the Economic and Social Council that meets annually for two weeks in New York to discuss indigenous issues related to economic and social development, culture and human rights. UNPO assists its Members in taking advantage of this important and rare opportunity for indigenous groups to directly address the UN and its member states, and make their voices heard at the highest levels of the international system.

UN FORUM ON MINORITY ISSUES

The Forum on Minority Issues was established to provide a platform for promoting dialogue and cooperation on issues pertaining to national, ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities. It also provides thematic input into the work of the Independent Expert on Minority Issues. The first session of the Forum was convened in 2008; since that time, UNPO has coordinated two large delegations of Member representatives to the Forum. These delegations were highly successful in both facilitating the participation of UNPO Members and building stronger connections with external communities of minority groups, advocates, experts and UN officials.



Representing Iranian Kurdistan, Mr. Loghman Ahmedi makes a statement to the Third UN Forum on Minority Issues.

UNPO DEMOCRACY AND GOOD GOVERNANCE PROGRAM

Democracy is a central tenet of UNPO's work. UNPO therefore engages in election monitoring and fact-finding missions where appropriate. Documentation produced by these missions and its dissemination to the international community strengthens democracy and good governance in the regions involved by holding stakeholders responsible for the implementation of recommendations. One of UNPO's first missions sent representatives to Abkhazia, Georgia and the Northern Caucasus to investigate the ongoing conflict in the fractured region. The primary objective of the mission was to research possible mediation and negotiation strategies involving the major parties. Mission participants met with elected officials, diplomats, international humanitarian agencies, NGO's and victims of the violence, and recorded widespread violations of human rights from both sides. Pursuant to the mission observations, UNPO called for all parties involved in the territorial conflict to begin negotiating a ceasefire, and for the newly appointed OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities to make an official visit to the region.

More recently, UNPO undertook an election monitoring mission to Iraqi Kurdistan. This mission was intended to examine the conduct of the 25 July 2009 parliamentary and presidential elections in the region's Erbil Governorate. UNPO issued a number of recommendations based on its observations during the mission, including calls for improved voter education, better training for electoral staff, encouragement of independent media coverage and support for civil society engagement.





UNPO AT THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

An expanding and dynamic European Union has become an important forum where issues affecting UNPO Members are debated and where their presence and visibility has become integral to effectively advocating their causes. UNPO has dedicated considerable efforts to working with its growing network of partners within the European Parliament and ensuring that UNPO Members are able to make efficient and effective use of its political instruments. UNPO Members are increasingly included in relevant high-

level hearings, panels and conferences, and UNPO has arranged a number of meetings between MEPs and Member representatives. The UNPO Secretariat has also been able to monitor and react to positions of the European Parliament as never before, lobbying for the inclusion of Member issues in resolutions, reports and circulated letters. In addition to these activities, the UNPO secretariat engages with media from around the world to promote the organization's mission and that of its members.

UNPO IN THE NETHERLANDS

Founded at the Peace Palace in The Hague in 1991, UNPO has always had close ties to the Netherlands and the Municipality of The Hague. The city is the international home of peace and justice – themes which underpin the ethos of UNPO. A base in the Netherlands allows UNPO to make strong international links, connecting those suffering the consequences of exclusion and exploitation with appropriate mechanisms by which these issues can be addressed. UNPO also maintains close relationships with the Dutch Parliament and the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The Dutch government is often a leader in foreign policy related to human rights and situations of armed conflict. UNPO Members are provided with an opportunity to provide their input into debates made by representatives of the Dutch government, informing decision-making and raising the profile of the organization's membership.

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCES

UNPO organizes and takes part in conferences around the globe. Such events are an important element of UNPO's work, allowing UNPO Members to share their knowledge and insight into fractured regions. The knowledge brought into and generated by conferences also plays an important role in guiding the work of UNPO. In January 2011, UNPO's Brussels office organized and hosted *The City of Kashgar: An Oasis of the Silk Road on the Brink of Extinction*. The conference was held to reveal the desperate human rights situation in Kashgar. Members of the European Parliament pledged to release an urgent resolution and feature the ongoing human rights abuse in the Chinese city on the European agenda.



Conference on Iran, Headquarters of the Nonviolent Radical Party, Rome.

DEMONSTRATIONS AND EVENTS

UNPO regularly organizes and hosts demonstrations and events by Member groups and their associations; the aim of these rallies is to increase awareness and visibility of UNPO's Members and their issues. Target groups of these events include the general public, local and international media and influential public officials.



Uyghur demonstration in Geneva, Switzerland

OUTREACH AND APPEALS

UNPO has made significant advancements over the past twenty years in improving its visibility as well as its communication with Members and interested parties. The organization seeks contacts within the fields of journalism and advocacy, and has made a number of advancements in expanding its partnerships and networks. UNPO aims to improve the presence of its Members in the news media and has made strides towards that goal through the submission of op-eds and letters to major newspapers and the cultivation of a reputation as a reliable source of first-hand knowledge and information for journalists and policy-makers. The organization reacts quickly to news affecting Members by issuing urgent appeals, campaigns and statements of condemnation or concern. In addition, UNPO regularly produces publications addressing topics of concern to its Members from *their* perspective, contributing valuable insight to a number of highly relevant debates.

EFFECTIVE PARTICIPATION TRAINING PROGRAM

UNPO is committed to helping Members more effectively engage in national, regional and international forums wherein their voices can be heard. While human rights violations often require context-specific action, a wide range of Members have gained important knowledge of the options for action through training programs provided by UNPO. Trainings take place upon request by Members, often in parallel to high-level meetings, hearings, seminars or conferences at the UN and the European Parliament as well as in local Member communities. Continuity and transfer of knowledge and skills to a younger generation is considered fundamental to the work of UNPO. These trainings utilize the “train the trainer” technique, which has the benefit of significant multiplier effects. UNPO’s initiatives focus on interactive training methods and problem-based learning, contributing to and providing space for interactive dialogue.



Participants take part in a lively discussion at SpeakOut!, a UNPO-organized training for indigenous youth activists.

SPECIAL ENVOY TO HIS HOLINESS, THE DALAI LAMA, MR. LODI G. GYARI



It is indeed a great honor as one of the Founding Fathers of UNPO to contribute a few words to the UNPO Anniversary Publication as we celebrate the 20th Anniversary of the organization. It is also heartening that many of the founding Members have achieved various forms of political solutions to their freedom struggles and live with peace, human rights and democracy, towards which UNPO made immense contributions.

As UNPO celebrates this milestone, it is important for Members to note that the organization was inspired by the Allied Committee of the Peoples of Eastern Turkestan, Inner Mongolia, Manchuria and Tibet. This committee was founded in 1985 as a coalition of indigenous and marginalized communities who decided to unify in their fight to highlight their shared cause at the international level.

As the Allied Committee worked, Tibetans and Uyghurs began to realize that unrepresented peoples and nations required a global platform that generated solidarity and collaboration with other oppressed peoples in order to make an impact on global geopolitics. With such an objective, we initially began outreach during the Soviet Union regime with organizations and dissidents of the freedom struggles in Baltic countries, including the late Dr. Linnart Mall of Estonia. Dr. Michael van Walt van Praag, the founding General Secretary of UNPO, was also among us and helped to conceptualize the establishment of UNPO and its program.

Like the Allied Committee, the foundation of UNPO was, and continues to be, deeply inspired by the principle of non-violence with which His Holiness the Dalai Lama has guided the Tibetan freedom struggle for the past six decades. I am deeply grateful that the current leadership and membership of UNPO, which has grown over the years, continues to uphold non-violence as its core principle.

I was fortunate to be associated with the modest Tibetan contribution to UNPO during the past two decades despite our restraints in terms of hu-

man and financial resources. I assure UNPO that we will continue to offer our suggestions to further strengthen your work in the future. In this respect, on behalf of the Founding Fathers of UNPO, I wish to wholeheartedly thank the financial contributors to the organization, whose donations have been central to the execution of UNPO activities, including the City of The Hague, the Nonviolent Radical Party, the Taiwan Foundation for Democracy, the International Campaign for Tibet-Europe, and others, who generously aided UNPO in the recent years. I would like to conclude this message by commending the dedicated staff and interns working with the UNPO Secretariat. I would also like to thank the General Secretaries, past and present, and UNPO's Members for their continued support to His Holiness the Dalai Lama and the six million people of Tibet as we continue our struggle for justice, peace and freedom on the Tibetan Plateau.

*Lodi G. Gyari
10 January, 2011
Washington, DC*

FIRST UNPO GENERAL SECRETARY, MR. MICHAEL van WALT van PRAAG

In the midst of UNPO's creation, in an undisclosed location across from the KGB headquarters in Tartu, Estonia in 1989 and 1990, only very few people understood that the world was on the verge of monumental changes. By the time UNPO was officially inaugurated at the Peace Palace in the Hague, the breakup of the Soviet Union was imminent, and with it the prospect of freedom for many captive peoples. These were exciting times, and UNPO was in the middle of the changes that swept across the world.

Over the past twenty years, many of UNPO's Members have gained independence and others have achieved new degrees of self-government, democracy, and human rights that have greatly improved Member's lives and in some cases satisfied their current political needs. Some Members are involved in peaceful negotiation processes to achieve greater freedom for their peoples, while others are making progress

within the political systems of which they form a part.

Despite this undeniable progress, too many disenfranchised communities remain unrecognized and their rights denied in all parts of the world. Many of our Members are immersed in painful conflicts to which the world has paid little attention. In light of these ongoing situations, UNPO's mission — to be a platform for the unrepresented nations and peoples of the world and to promote the democracy and self-determination through nonviolent means—is more crucial than ever.

As we find ourselves in a more polarized and more violent world once again, the enormous hope fostered by positive change in the 1990's has been replaced by a climate of fear, intolerance, big-power competition and hostility. As a result, repression inflicted upon many peoples under the guise of combating terrorism has become a

normative feature of world politics. In this new, unstable environment, indigenous lifestyles face extinction as the race for the extraction of the remaining mineral, carbohydrate and forest resources of our planet has only increased with time. Due to these changes, UNPO's new task is not an easy one.

I wish to take this opportunity to congratulate the Presidency of UNPO, its General Secretary and the Secretariat staff, as well as all of the organization's Members for the tremendous work they are undertaking and the impact they are making in the world. It is my fervent hope that the dreams and aspirations that led to the creation of UNPO will someday become reality, so that the organization may no longer be needed. *Inshallah!*

Michael van Waalt van Praag

Van Walt van Praag makes a statement at a public event in The Hague honoring the life of Ogoni activist and former UNPO Vice President Ken Saro Wiwa





UNPO Member Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People (MOSOP) protest in Niger Delta, 2005

FORMER UNPO PRESIDENT, MR. LEDUM MITEE



In 1991, when representatives of 15 nations and peoples met at the Peace Palace in The Hague to found the Unrepresented Nations and Peoples Organization (UNPO) on the basis of the shared principles of non violence, human rights, democracy, environmental protection and self determination, they hardly envisaged that their humble efforts would change the course of events in the four corners of the globe.

The fact that within even the first dec-

ade of its existence the UNPO membership quadrupled and spread worldwide is testament to the universality of its message and the acceptance of its relevance to world peace. Its achievements, though at times understated, have been phenomenal. While several of the Members who sought self determination are now self governing, others have become active participants and leaders in peace processes. Many more Members have attained international visibility and exposure. It is of these accomplishments that the organization should be proud.

The case of the Ogoni people that I represent is distinctive. The profound and sustained international attention and support that our struggle has received sprang from our membership in the UNPO, which not only exposed our

cause internationally but also built our capacities for international engagements. Our campaign was so successful in generating local and international pressure that it was able to save the lives of many activists involved.

Realizing that the diverse membership of the UNPO represents many of the world's trouble spots, it is my fervent hope that the world recognizes that in our diversity lies our strength, and that the universality of our valued principles inspires hope for world peace!

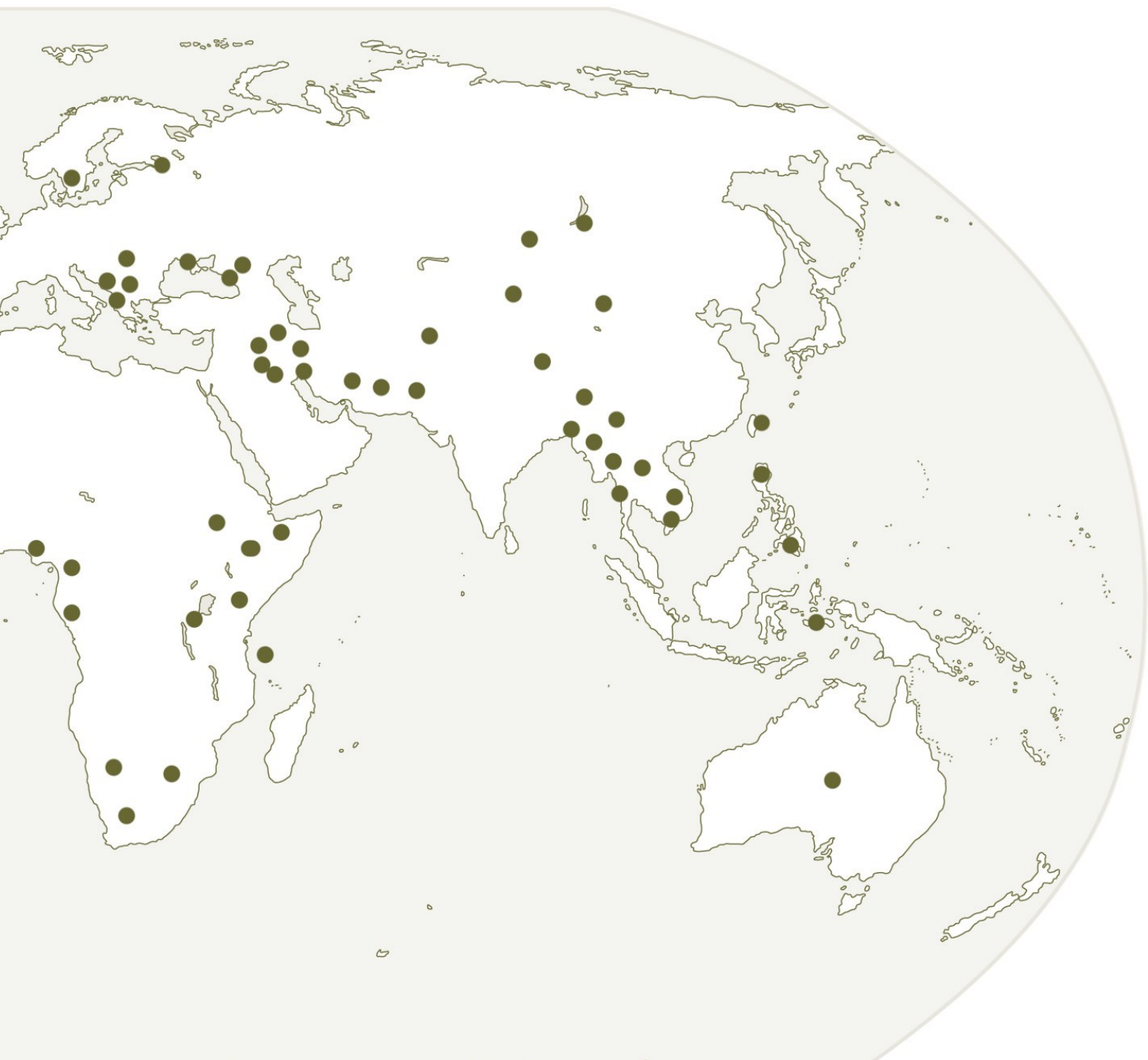
Ledum Mitee

WORLD MAP OF MEMBERS

ABKHAZIA
 ABORIGINALS OF AUSTRALIA
 AFRIKANER
 AHWAZ
 ASSYRIA
 BALOCHISTAN
 BATWA
 BURMA
 BURYATIA
 CABINDA
 CHIN
 CHITTAGONG HILL TRACTS
 CIRCASSIA
 CORDILLERA
 CRIMEAN TATARS
 DEGAR-MONTAGNARDS
 EAST TURKESTAN
 GILGIT BALTISTAN
 GREEK MINORITY IN ALBANIA
 HMONG CHAOFA
 HUNGARIANS IN ROMANIA
 INNER MONGOLIA
 IRANIAN KURDISTAN
 IRAQI KURDISTAN
 IRAQI TURKMEN
 KA LAHUI HAWAII
 KARENNI
 KHMER KROM
 KOSOVA
 MAASAI
 MAPUCHE
 MON
 MORO
 NAGALIM
 OGADEN
 OGONI
 OROMO
 REHOBOTH BASTERS
 SANJAK
 SCANIA
 SINDH
 SOMALILAND
 SOUTHERN AZERBAIJAN
 SOUTHERN CAMEROONS
 SOUTH MOLUCCAS
 TAIWAN
 TIBET
 TSIMSHIAN
 TUA
 UDMURT
 VHAVENDA
 WEST BALOCHISTAN
 ZANZIBAR



FOR MORE INFORMATION ON
 OUR MEMBERS PLEASE VISIT OUR
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SUCCESS STORIES

UNPO Members building peace and gaining prominence on the global stage

ZANZIBAR

Zanzibar, an autonomous state off the coast of Tanzania, has been a member of UNPO since August 1991. In its efforts to build peace in a state prone to intense violence, the state has vastly improved its electoral system and continues to make significant and rapid progress in its democratic development. In 2009, following yet another outbreak of political violence, the leaders of Zanzibar's two major parties (CCM and CUF) met to discuss how they could avoid future political turmoil. Following this meeting, the two parties introduced a national unity motion, which introduced a system of proportional representation, replacing the previous winner-take-all system. On 31 July 2010, this proposal was passed peacefully by a popular referendum.

KOSOVA

On 17 February 2008, Members of the Assembly of Kosova, acting as the elected leaders of the people of Kosova, unanimously declared its independence from the Serbia. Later that year, Serbia requested that the International Court of Justice (ICJ) examine the case and issue an opinion on the legality of Kosova's declaration of independence. On 22 July 2010, the ICJ issued a ruling declaring that Kosova's declaration was not in violation of international law, stating further that international regulations contain no prohibitions against declarations of independence. On the heels of this landmark ruling, a number of powerful states have publicly declared their recognition of Kosova's status as a fully independent state. At the time of this publication, 74 UN member nations have officially recognized Kosova as an independent state. The ICJ's ruling has since been recognized as international legal precedent.

SOMALILAND

Somaliland formally declared independence from the state of Somalia in 1991, and has been a UNPO Member since 2004. The region has established a strong and democratic system of governance, which has managed to maintain relative peace within its borders. Somaliland has been hailed as a beacon of peace and stability in a region where both are scarce. While the United States government has not formally declared support of an independent Somaliland, it did provide capacity-building support and democracy and governance training to Somaliland's government in advance of its 2010 elections, which were deemed free and fair by international observers. The success of Somaliland's democracy is gaining increasingly widespread international recognition and its government maintains informal ties to a number of foreign governments.

FORMER MEMBERS AT THE UNITED NATIONS

Six former Members of UNPO have achieved full,
internationally recognized statehood, and are now members of the
United Nations (UN)

ESTONIA

Founding Member of UNPO.
Member of the UN since 17 September 1991

GEORGIA

Founding Member of UNPO.
Member of the UN since 17 September 1991

LATVIA

Founding Member of UNPO.
Member of the UN since 17 September 1991

ARMENIA

Founding Member of UNPO
Member of the UN since 2 March 1992

BELAU (PALAU)

Founding Member of UNPO
Member of the UN since 15 December 1994

EAST TIMOR (TIMOR LESTE)

Member of UNPO from 17 January 1993
Member of the UN since 27 September 2002

THE CHALLENGES AHEAD

The work of UNPO, much like the world in which it operates, is increasingly complex. While the past twenty years have seen the success of several movements for statehood, many more such movements have been violently suppressed and rejected by both state governments and the international community as a whole.

Following the attacks of 11 September 2001, governments have increasingly utilized false charges of terrorism as a tool to delegitimize those who advocate for self-determination, the recognition of their rights and the survival of their culture. Accusations of terrorism, meant to lend legitimacy to brutal crackdowns, are now routinely leveled against many peaceful advocacy groups. Due to such attacks, UNPO works to counter deliberate disinformation about its Members, defending them in international institutions as well as in the court of public opinion.

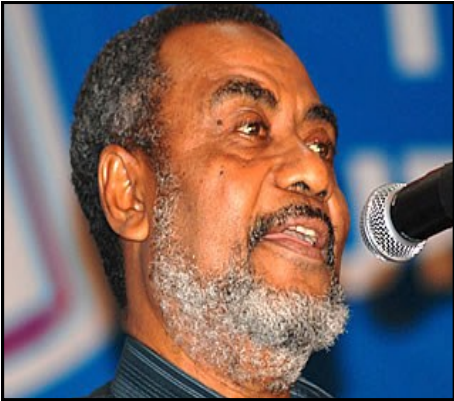
The coming years present a daunting array of new challenges for the organization and its Members. Climate change, population growth and the prolonged effects of the global economic crisis will continue to acutely affect UNPO Members. The effects of global climate change and population growth are expected to drastically increase conflict over the control and distribution of increasingly scarce resources. Denied access to political institutions and systems of redress at both the local and international levels, UNPO's Members are at a distinct disadvantage in the struggle for resources and survival. UNPO aims to counter the negative effects of these trends by encouraging alternative methods of engagement for the peaceful resolution of conflict and addressing root causes by promoting the right of all peoples to a peaceful and legitimate process of self-determination.

UNPO looks to the future with the same sense of purpose that was present at the Peace Palace twenty years ago. Just as its Members cannot step away from the struggles they face in their daily lives, UNPO will not yield in its efforts to project their voices into the international arena.

The Niger River Delta burning,
2007



FORMER PRESIDENT OF UNPO PRESIDENT AND CURRENT VICE PRESIDENT OF ZANZIBAR, MR. SEIF SHARIF HAMAD



In 1991, fifteen unrepresented nations and peoples gathered in the Peace Palace in The Hague to deliberate on their future. The main focus of that deliberation was to defend the rights of their peoples who were oppressed in by advocating for non-violence, human rights and democracy. It is a well known proverb that *unity is power*. It is in this spirit that this small group decided to unite and launch a mutual campaign to protect their fundamental rights. UNPO was born as an instrument to carry the banner of the crying voices of those deprived peoples.

The Founding Members of UNPO set principles that provided direction on the kinds of activities required for achieving its goals and mission. UNPO's principles are based on the strategy of peaceful struggle. This means that, once desired rights are obtained, scars of the past will not remain and will not create opportunity for revenge. Instead consultation and consensus will inform future decision making.

UNPO was founded to raise awareness of its Members sufferings to the decision-making bodies of the world. To achieve this aim UNPO has initiated and

carried out a number of activities, including special programs which intend to raise awareness of its Members globally.

One of the important UNPO activities is lobbying at the United Nations (UN), European Parliament and the European Commission on issues of importance concerning its Members. The organization acts as a liaison between the Members and these international forums. Additionally, UNPO has defended cases of violations against its Members to the UN Commission for Human Rights and Human Rights Council. In addition, UNPO acts as a mediator between NGO's and UN bodies. Recently it has worked to present Members' concerns in the Universal Periodic Review and has assisted in raising its Members' concerns to UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous People.

UNPO takes pride in its growth over the last twenty years. Starting with only fifteen Members, it has now grown to a prominent forum with 53 Members worldwide.

Some of UNPOs Members have achieved the desired end to their struggles. East Timor gained independence from Indonesia in 2002. Estonia, Georgia and Latvia all gained UN recognition. Palau gained independence in 1994. Albanians in Macedonia reached an agreement on wider rights with Macedonia in 2001. Bugainville attained an autonomy agreement with Papua New Guinea in 2000. Gagauzia reached an autonomy

agreement with Moldova in 1994. Aceh arrived at an autonomy agreement with Indonesia in 2005 and Lakotah Nation was declared as Republic of Lakotah in 2007. In Zanzibar, now there is a Government of National Unity, and CUF, a member of UNPO, is an integral part of this unified government. Therefore, I humbly urge all nations and peoples who are struggling for their rights to recognize the important role that UNPO can play in helping them achieve their goals.

I take this opportunity to congratulate UNPO on its achievements to this point. However, human rights violations, suppressive authoritarian regimes and environmental degradation still abound in the world. UNPO still has a lot of work ahead. I hope with the conviction and determination of the UNPO Presidency and the General Secretariat, under the able leadership of the General Secretary, much can be done and the suffering of the world's oppressed will cease.

Seif Sharif Hamad

UNPO SUPPORTERS

Contributions from governments, foundations, NGO's and individuals, as well as annual fees from the Members themselves, provide much-needed resources that enable UNPO to continue carrying out its work. In addition to the contribution of funds, UNPO would not succeed without the tireless work of countless volunteers and interns who donate their time to advance the organization's work. Without the support of its many contributors, UNPO would not be able to succeed. UNPO extends its thanks to the following funders, past and present:

Andrew Wainwrights Reform Trust (UK)

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Taiwan Foundation for Democracy

Taiwan Foreign Affairs Ministry

Threshold Foundation (US)

Nonviolent Radical Party (Italy)

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