

## UU United Nations Office All-Star Lineup Focused on Peacebuilding

The UU United Nations Office (UUUNO) welcomed to New York City an intergenerational seminar largely developed and presented by young people. Titled *Picking Up the Pieces: Building a Culture of Peace*, the April 3-5 seminar attracted some 150 persons of all ages from throughout the United States and Canada.

Held at a precarious time for war and peace, the seminar heard from the collective wisdom of an outstanding cast of speakers:

- Prudence Bushnell, former U.S. Ambassador to Kenya and to Guatemala
- Gillian Martin Sorenson, former UN Assistant Secretary-General for External Relations
- The Rev. William Sinkford, President of the UUA
- Keith Boykin, editor of *The Daily Voice*, CNN political commentator, and former Special Assistant to President Clinton

Says Bruce Knotts, UU-UNO Executive Director, “This is our organization at its very best. We provided a uniquely important opportunity for training and learning, an opportunity that inspires our youth to leadership in international affairs.”

Other notables presenters at workshops included:

- The Rev. Eric Cherry, Director of International Resources,
- Heidi Hulan, Counselor and Head of the Political Section, Canadian Permanent Mission to the United Nations
- Simone Monasebian, Chief of the UN Office of Drugs and Crime
- Jane Hall Lute (invited), UN Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations
- Christopher Warburton, from Sierra Leone, Professor of Economics, John Jay College
- Jared Cohen, Policy Planning Staff, U.S. State Department
- Jeffrey Huffines, Chair, NGO / DPI, UN and Baha’I Representative to the UN
- Adam Gerhardstein, Legislative Assistant, UUA Washington Office

In addition to panel presentations and discussions, participants toured the United Nations, screened the film *Sometimes in April*, attended receptions, and developed a policy statement based on what they had learned. Far from a passive experience, the seminar enabled attendees to help build a culture of peace. Past policy statements and recommendations, such as last year’s, on “Human Trafficking,” have been influential within UN circles, and participants were able to take their new knowledge home to form the basis of peacebuilding groups in their own congregations.

Workshop and panel sessions included:

- Human Rights, the United Nations, and Conflict Resolution: Working Toward Sustainable Peacebuilding
- Beyond Guns: Approaches to Human Security

- Peace, Justice, and Reconciliation
- Unitarian Universalists and Peace.

Keep in touch with UUUNO events by regularly visiting [www.uu-uno.org](http://www.uu-uno.org). The UUUNO is the UU voice at the UN representing UU congregations throughout the USA and Canada. The UUUNO functions through individual and congregational contributions which are its only source of funding. Don't let the UU voice at the UN be silenced. Support the UUUNO. Secure contributions can be made via [www.uu-uno.org](http://www.uu-uno.org).

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