

## **UNA-USA San Francisco celebrates UNA DAY on the 66th anniversary of the United Nations**

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October 24 is a special date for the global community: this year, it marks the 66<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the United Nations. UNA-USA San Francisco is proud to invite the local community to celebrate this momentous anniversary on Sunday, October 23, in the birthplace of the United Nations, and to pledge its continued support for the mission and programs of the world's first international peace alliance.

In 1945, President Franklin D. Roosevelt encouraged the heads of 50 states to join forces in the city of San Francisco and commit to international peace-keeping by signing the UN Charter. Since then, the United Nations has been delivering peace and democracy, promoting human rights, building economic prosperity, and advancing global health around the world – often with little fanfare or media attention. Now, with 192 member states, the UN continues to strive for change and progress with new objectives, like the Millennium Development Goals for 2015, and new entities such as UN Women, which inaugurated in 2010.

Thus, we are gathering on October 23 to recognize and support UN's past, present, and future efforts – but also to celebrate its numerous and inspiring achievements.

Since its origins, the UN has – among other accomplishments – managed to:

- save millions of lives through peace-keeping operations;
- end regional conflicts by negotiating peaceful settlements, including the Iran-Iraq war, the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan, and the end of the civil war in El Salvador;
- enable civilians to participate in free and fair elections in Cambodia, Namibia, Eritrea, Mozambique, South Africa, and East Timor, among others;
- call attention to – and resolve – dozens of human rights violations and cases, and hold perpetrators accountable for them;
- prevent over-fishing, protect the ozone layer, curb global warming, limit deforestation, clean up pollution, and inspire treaties on biodiversity and climate change in support of sustainable development and the protection of natural resources;
- monitor and minimize the use of nuclear materials for military purposes;
- end apartheid in South Africa and aid Palestinian refugees;
- support African development by investing in entrepreneurs and new enterprises as well as alleviating hunger and rural poverty;
- promote women's rights through training and education;
- provide safe drinking water to 1.3 billion people in rural areas;
- eradicate smallpox by 1980, and eradicate polio in all but 5 countries, with the cooperation of Rotary International and the Melinda and Bill Gates Foundation;
- clear land mines from Afghanistan, Angola, Cambodia, El Salvador, Mozambique, Rwanda and Somalia that still kill and maim thousands of innocent people annually;
- protect intellectual property and promote the free flow of information;

- empower the voiceless, including children and workers; and
- improve global communications and cultural exchange.

Although much has evidently been achieved since the signing of the UN Charter, there is still a great deal of work to be done. Please visit [www.unausa.org](http://www.unausa.org) today to learn more about UN DAY and how you can contribute to the global mission of the United Nations by spreading the word on October 23, 2011. Also, visit [www.una-sf.org](http://www.una-sf.org) to participate in this year's UN DAY celebration in San Francisco, which will include guest speakers, African drums and dance, a welcome for the new country of South Sudan, and more.