

**BRITISH ASSOCIATION  
OF FORMER  
UNITED NATIONS  
CIVIL SERVANTS  
(BAFUNCS)**

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**INFORMATION NOTE 9**

**UNITED NATIONS CAREER RECORDS PROJECT (UNCRP)**

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**1. Request for contributions**

Contributions are sought from all former UN staff and their spouses so as to strengthen the historical and personal records of former British, and other, UN staff members. This applies to both Professional and General Service staff. Contributions may be submitted by completing the questionnaire and instructions contained in the annexes to this Information Note; it can be adapted as necessary to reflect personal circumstances, and those parts which do not apply can be omitted. As well as biographical data, contributors are requested to consider providing any of the following:

- ✓ Curriculum Vitae (CV)
- ✓ Memoirs, in any style, format or length
- ✓ Photos
- ✓ Unpublished papers, manuscripts, letters, UN reports, etc.
- ✓ Oral interview recordings (tape, CD)

Contributions should preferably be submitted electronically, but hard copy material is also welcome. Contributors are invited to indicate programmes and projects with which they were associated, and to draw out lessons of experience. The experiences of spouses are also particularly appreciated. Contributors may stipulate that papers may be closed for a period of years on the grounds of confidentiality. Contributors and their descendants retain ownership of their personal copyright even while donating their material

## **2. Background**

### **(a) UNCRP Stage 1**

From 1989 to 1992 a first stage of the United Nations Career Records Project (UNCRP) was carried out under the direction of Richard Symonds, who had served with the UN and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) for 25 years. Based at St. Antony's College, Oxford, and working closely with the Bodleian Library, the project involved the distribution of questionnaires to a total of more than 800 people who had been directly employed by UN agencies. A total of 233 responses (28 per cent) were received, as well as many papers. Stage I benefited from a small grant from the Ford Foundation.

A Report, entitled 'The United Nations Careers Records Project: Final Report of First Stage 1989 – 92' was published by Richard Symonds in 1992. A catalogue of the UNCRP papers by then in the Bodleian Library was compiled by Martin Jennings and put online in 1995.

### **(b) UNCRP Stage 2**

After a gap of 11 years a second stage was started in 2003 under the coordination of Michael Askwith, a newly retired UNDP staff member. The UNCRP Stage 2 was designed to continue the work carried out under Stage I and to collect career records of those who had retired since the end of Stage I. Since 2003, about 100 people have been contacted, of whom 30 have submitted full or partial questionnaires; contributions have been received in the form of papers, memoirs, books, CVs and photos.

Other activities carried out during Stage 2 included the organization of a Witness Seminar in 2005 to commemorate the 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the United Nations (see [www.bodley.ox.ac.uk/dept/scwmss/modpol/uncrp.htm](http://www.bodley.ox.ac.uk/dept/scwmss/modpol/uncrp.htm); a consultation on the UNCRP at Ditchley Park in May 2009; a Witness Seminar at the Rothschild Institute, London, in collaboration with King's College, London on "The UN in Crisis Situations" in October 2009 featuring the experiences of Dame Margaret Anstee and Alan Doss; and the collection of obituaries and memoirs, including of former United Nations Association – UK (UNA–UK) volunteers.

UNCRP materials were also used in the research of Dr Teresa Tomás Rangil, Jesus College, Oxford, which provided the basis of a seminar held in the 2013 'Authorship, Memory & Manuscripts' seminar series convened by the Bodleian Library '*Reintroducing "Policy from Below": The UN and the Congo Crisis (1960-1964)*'. (4 February 2013) (<http://www.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/weston/our-work/seminars/amm2013/uncrp>)

**(c) A merged UNCRP**

Stages 1 and 2 were merged in 2015 to eliminate the distinctions in time between the two stages and emphasize that the UNCRP represents a continuous process of records collection.

This coincided with the commemoration of the 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the UN in 2015 and the implementation of two complementary activities:

**1) UN at 70 Witness Seminar Programme:**

This programme comprised three separate but interconnected seminars:

- ***Development Cooperation***, in conjunction with the Institute of Development Studies (IDS) and UNA–UK, King’s College, London, and the Bodleian Library, held at the University of Sussex (12–14 May 2015)
- ***Humanitarian Action***, in conjunction with the Bodleian Library, All Soul’s College, Oxford, King’s College, London, UNA-UK and the Overseas Development Institute (ODI) held at the new Weston (Bodleian) Library, Oxford (16 October 2015)
- ***Peace and Security***, in conjunction with UNA-UK, the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, King’s College, London, held at Church House, Westminster (11 January 2016)

These three Witness Seminars were followed by the publication of:

- ***IDS Evidence Report, no 205 (October 2016)*** on “*The UN at 70, and the UK: Development Cooperation, Humanitarian Action and Peace and Security – Lessons from Experience and Policy Recommendations*” (<http://www.bafuncs.org/UNat70 OnlineReport.pdf>)<sup>2</sup>

This was co-edited by Sir Richard Jolly and Michael Askwith, and consists of a selection of articles and policy recommendations deriving from each of the witness seminars. It was launched at the House of Lords on 20 October 2016,;

**2) A Guide for researchers to the United Nations Career Records Project (UNCRP) at the Bodleian Library of the University of Oxford**

This comprised an Up-dated inventory of summaries of UNCRP career records. It was edited by Bill Jackson, primarily as an e-book and readily accessible on the website. The Guide contains short biodata, brief summaries of the material contributed and shelf mark reference numbers to 506 contributors since the inception of the Project, thus covering both Stages 1 and 2. <http://www.bafuncs.org/UNCRP%20Guide%202017.pd>.

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<sup>1</sup> See also <http://www.ids.ac.uk/news/renewed-focus-on-un-could-help-secure-uk-s-new-role-on-world-stage>; <https://www.una.org.uk/news/una-uk-co-hosts-parliamentary-meeting-uks-role-un>

## **Annex 1. Guidelines for contributing materials to the UNCRP<sup>3</sup>**

### **Request for contributions**

Contributions are sought from all former UN staff and their spouses so as to strengthen the historical and personal records of former British, and other, UN staff members. This applies both to former Professional and to General Service staff. Contributions may be submitted by completing the questionnaire contained in this Annex; it can be adapted as necessary to reflect personal circumstances, and those parts which do not apply can be omitted. As well as biographical data, contributors are requested to consider providing any of the following:

1. Curriculum Vitae (CV)
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### **Note on completion of questionnaire**

#### **I. Purpose**

This questionnaire is designed for several purposes:

- 1. Historical:** To document the contributions of former UN staff to the UN system, which can be stored in the Bodleian Library, and used by future researchers
- 2. Professional:** To provide an opportunity for former UN staff to reflect on their careers, and to highlight what they consider as their main professional and personal contributions to the organizations and countries in which they served
- 3. Personal:** To provide personal insights into the careers of former UN staff, of events and incidents in which they were involved, both amusing and otherwise, of the people they met, and of the countries where they worked and lived
- 4. Family:** To provide summaries of the lives of former UN staff, which could be of interest to their own families and future generations. Contributions from spouses are also welcome.

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<sup>3</sup> The Questionnaire can be completed on-line, downloaded from the UNCRP section of the BAFUNCS website ([www.bafuncs.org](http://www.bafuncs.org)) or received from the UNCRP Coordinator ([career.records@bafuncs.org](mailto:career.records@bafuncs.org))

## **II. Completion of the questionnaire**

The questionnaire is designed as a flexible tool for stimulating personal reflection, summarizing information, and identifying documentation and records which could have potential long-term historical, professional and personal value.

The questionnaire's template should be used flexibly, and adapted to the particular situation and experience of each respondent. Information provided can be as long or as short as the respondent wishes. It should preferably be prepared on computer, so as to enable the writer maximum flexibility in terms of space, content and format. However, where this is not possible, hand-written contributions are welcome.

Contributions from spouses in any format are particularly welcome.

Where the completion of written questionnaires may prove difficult, respondents are encouraged to record their contributions on tape, as part of an "oral history"

The more completed questionnaires that are received, the more useful they will be for documenting the various contributions of staff of all levels, as seen by themselves, to the UN system to date.

## **III. Use of questionnaire**

Please note that the information provided by contributors is initially stored as Word or scanned pdf/jpeg documents with the UNCRP Coordinator, who will then forward it to the Bodleian Library for long-term preservation and use by researchers.

Electronic contributions will be sent by email to the UNCRP section of the 'Bodleian Electronic Archives and Manuscripts' (BEAM) (for the attention of the Digital Archivist at [beam@bodleian.ox.ac.uk](mailto:beam@bodleian.ox.ac.uk)) who will acknowledge receipt, and follow up if there are any issues with the submission.

Contributors may wish to suggest an embargo period should they feel that one is required, although the Bodleian Library may decide to impose one independently if it is felt that all the relevant factors, especially in relation to third-parties, have not been fully taken into consideration (see Part VI.1).

Contributors should also indicate if they are willing for researchers to create copies of their submission for research purposes and whether they would be willing for the Bodleian Library to publish the information online (see Part VI.2).

## **Annex 2. UNCRP Questionnaire**

To be completed preferably electronically or manually, and to be sent to:  
Michael Askwith ([askwith\\_michael@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:askwith_michael@yahoo.co.uk) or [career.records@bafuncs.org](mailto:career.records@bafuncs.org))

Date :

### **Part I. Biographical data**

**1. Name:**

**2. Address**

(i) Address

(ii) Telephone(s): Home:

Mobile:

**3. Email:**

**4. Date and place of birth:**

**5. Nationality**

**6. Spouse(s) and children's names:**

**7. Education:**

...

....

**8. UN Agency(ies) with which respondent served, with dates (year), and duty stations<sup>4</sup>**

	Starting date	Completion date	UN agency	Department	Position	Duty station

**9. Total years of service**

**10. Other career assignments, with approximate dates**

10.1 Pre-UN career

10.2 Post UN career

**11. Spouse employment, if with UN system**

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<sup>4</sup> Add rows as appropriate

**Part II Personal recollections**

**1. Professional contributions.**

*Describe the main activities and results achieved in the course of your various assignments<sup>5</sup>*

*Please highlight any particular initiatives and achievements which you feel made a difference to a recipient Government or beneficiary group, to a UN agency or the UN system in general, which you feel merit recording for historical purposes.*

**2. Personal memories**

*Describe any special memories you might have of your time with the UN, and what it is has meant to you and your family.*

*Please also include personal contributions and memories of your spouse, so as to enable her or his experiences to receive due recognition.*

**3. Overall view of career with the UN**

*Provide an overall view on your career with the UN system, and what you felt you have given, as well as received, and learned from it.*

**Part III. Curriculum Vitae**

*Please add a recent CV, to complement the information given in Parts I and II above, and photos, if possible.*

**Part IV Publications and reports**

*List the main publications and reports prepared by you and/or with your assistance, which document some of the activities and assignments undertaken. A separate bibliographical list could be added, with references, dates etc.*

**Part V For eventual donation to Bodleian Library**

*List personal documents, writings, papers, diaries, photographs, articles, etc., which could be deposited in Bodleian Library, if desired.*

**Part VI Use of materials**

1) Suggested embargo period: ..... years

2) Agreement for use by researchers, including copying and publication on-line: Yes/No

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<sup>5</sup> Ref Part I Biographical Data, 8. UN Agency(ies) with which respondent served, with dates (year), and duty stations.

<b>BAFUNCS/UNCRP</b>	<b>Bodleian Library</b>
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