

APA NGO Representation at the United Nations Annual Report

2009

APA is an accredited non-governmental organization (NGO) to the United Nations Department of Public Information (DPI) the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), and has special consultative status to the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). In 2008, APA was elected to the Executive Board of the Conference of NGOs (CoNGO).

The Association is represented at UN headquarters in New York by a team of five volunteer NGO representatives (each appointed for renewable 5-year terms), three special project associates (appointed for 1-year renewable terms), and student interns appointed each academic year. The chair of the APA team also serves as the Main Representative to the UN for the Association. The APA Committee on International Relations in Psychology (CIRP) provides oversight for the APA UN representative team, and the APA Office of International Affairs provides administrative support.

APA UN/NGO COMMITTEE ACTIVITIES

Working in collaboration with other NGOs to present the voice of civil society at the United Nations is essential to effective outreach and input. The members of the APA team belong to and hold leadership positions in a variety of NGO committees, working groups, and task forces. APA's team works to ensure that UN documents and statements include a psychological / behavioral perspective; that psychological expertise is available to the UN through panels, briefings, and other educational activities, by organizing speaking invitations to psychologists, and by promulgating APA materials and activities relevant to UN goals. The APA team also attends briefings held by the UN Department of Public information and disseminates information about UN events to APA offices and members. Although the requested commitment from each APA team member is one day of volunteer activity per week, most more frequently engage in UN activities. In addition, all team members attend a once-monthly APA team meeting for updates and coordination.

Members of the APA team are involved with the following NGO committees, working groups and task forces. These committees meet regularly at UN headquarters and APA team members provide input and organize committee-related activities. The roles of APA team members are indicated in parentheses.

- NGO Committee on Ageing (Chair, members)
- NGO Committee on the Family (Co-Chair)
- NGO Committee on Ageing International Day of Older Persons Planning Committee (members)
- NGO Committee on the Family Working Group on Alternative and Extended Families (Chair)

- NGO Committee on Mental Health (Members-at-large, Executive Committee)
- NGO Committee on Mental Health Working Group on gender (member)
- NGO Committee on Mental Health Working Group on trauma (member)
- NGO Committee on Mental Health Subcommittee on mental health, racism, and other intolerances (member)
- NGO Committee on HIV/AIDS (Vice-Chair)
- NGO Committee on HIV/AIDS Subcommittee on Affordable Medication (SAM)(Chair)
- NGO Committee on HIV/AIDS World AIDS Day Briefing (organizer)
- NGO Committee on Social Development (CSocD) (member)
- NGO Committee on the Status of Women (CSW) (Members)
- NGO Committee on the Status of Women Subcommittee on Women and Climate Change (member)
- NGO Committee on the Status of Women, Beijing +15 Global NGO Forum, planning committee (member)
- NGO Committee on Sustainable Development (CSD) (member)
- NGO Committee on Sustainable Development *ad hoc* subcommittee to investigate ways for CSD to participate in Seal the Deal initiatives (recorder)
- NGO Committee for Indigenous Peoples (observer)
- NGO Committee for Health (observer)
- NGO Committee for Human Rights (observer)
- UNICEF Working Group on Violence Against Children (Vice-Chair)
- UNICEF Working Group on Violence Against Children, subcommittee Home and Family (member)
- UNICEF Working Group on Violence Against Children Working group on Girls (member)
- UNICEF Working Group on Violence Against Children Task Force to Stop Child Trafficking and Exploitation (Lead)
- UNICEF study group on Children and Violence (observer)

OTHER ACTIVITIES

- APA sits as an organization on the Executive Committee of the NGO Governance Group, CoNGO (quarterly meetings)
- APA co-coordinates the Annual Psychology Day at the United Nations through a planning committee comprised of representatives of the 7-8 psychology organizations at the UN
- The APA UN/NGO team regularly organizes a symposium at the APA annual convention. 2009 Symposium: *Human Rights and Social Justice and the UN: Reports from the Field and New York Headquarters*. Papers included: *Valuing Caregivers: Psychological and Physical Impact of Caring for HIV/AIDS Patients; A Report from the*

field: West African Projects; Advocating for the Rights of Women and Older Persons– Efforts at NY Headquarters; A Role for Psychologists in Statistical Capacity Building: The Case of Bosnia and Herzegovina; Social Justice at the 60th Anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights

- Coordination of the APA UN Intern program
- APA Team members contribute a regular column on *APA at the UN* to the international newsletter *Psychology International*
- The APA UN/NGO team hosts visitors and delegations to the UN

SPECIFIC ACTIVITIES ORGANIZED, COORDINATED, PRESENTED BY APA TEAM MEMBERS:

- NGO Committee on Ageing Panel discussion *Mental Health Emergency Medicine and Human Rights: Ageing in a World of All Ages*, in conjunction with the International Year of Reconciliation, cosponsored with the Committee on Mental Health (organized)
- NGO Committee on Ageing presentation *Impact of HIV/AIDS Care- giving on Girls and Older Women*. Co-sponsored with the Committee on the Status of Women (organized)
- NGO Committee on Ageing briefing on the UN Commission on Sustainable Development program (organized).
- NGO Committee on Ageing cross cultural presentation on *Relationships Fostering Human Rights* (organized).
- NGO Committee on Ageing presentation during meeting of the UN Commission on Sustainable Development *Climate Change and Older Persons: The Growing Problem of Drought and Desertification Meets a Growing Population*, co-sponsored with the Committees on Migration, Human Rights, ECOSOC, and the Permanent Mission of Brazil to the United Nations (organized).
- International Day of Older Persons (planning committee, and program organizers)
- NGO Committee on the Family presentation *Narrative Approaches to Families: An Interactive Panel of International Organizations*
- NGO Committee on the Family panel *Family Advocacy at the UN*
- Presentation *Mothers and Families: Challenges of a Changing World* on the occasion of the International Day of the Family
- Presentation and discussion of the 2009 Secretary General's Report on the Family: Family Policy, Intergenerational Solidarity and Social Protection.
- 2009 Commission on the Status of Women side event: *Valuing the Caregiver: the Physical and Psychological Impact of HIV/AIDS on the Caregiver* (organized and moderated)
- 2009 Commission on the Status of Women side event *Women and AIDS in Conflict Zones*
- 2009 Commission on the Status of Women side event *Sharing Responsibility for Care-giving*
- NGO Committee on HIV/AIDS presentation: *Challenges for Religious Leaders; HIV/AIDS and Older Persons in Tanzania*

- NGO Committee on HIV/AIDS presentation by Mari Ortega, Associate Director UNAIDS
- NGO Committee on HIV/AIDS presentation by Laurie Anderson, PhD, Psychologist, *Research on Treating Depression in HIV/AIDS Patients in South Africa*
- NGO Committee on HIV/AIDS presentation by Laurie Newell, Director, UN Cares, *Counseling and Serving UN Employees with HIV/AIDS*
- NGO Committee on HIV/AIDS presentation by Dr Chitayat (APA team) *Using Patent Pools to Provide Access to Affordable Medication*
- NGO Committee on HIV/AIDS presentation by R. Brent *Prevalence of HIV/AIDS in the U.S.*
- NGO Committee on HIV/AIDS presentation by Mary Owens *Nyumbani, Kenya, Home and Hospital for HIV/AIDS Affected Children*
- NGO Committee on HIV/AIDS talk *HIV/AIDS in Swaziland*
- Co-Moderator World AIDS Day: STOP AIDS
- Meeting of the NGO Committee on HIV/AIDS Subcommittee on Affordable Medication, SAM with UNAIDS and Ambassador of Swaziland to develop technical assistance in AIDS drugs and AIDS orphans
- Presentation for celebration of WORLD MENTAL HEALTH DAY 2009: *Mental Health in Primary Care: Enhancing Treatment & Promoting Mental Health*
- NGO Committee on the Status of Women (CSW) Subcommittee on Women and Climate Change – dissemination of APA's Task Force report on Psychology and Climate Change
- Contributions to the Subcommittee on Women and Climate Change policy paper for the UN Climate Change conference in Copenhagen
- NGO Committee on Sustainable Development (CSD): Seal the Deal campaign related to the UN Climate Change Conference in Copenhagen (<http://www.sealthedeal2009.org/>) - wrote the subcommittee's report to the CSD.
- APA provided feedback on the CSD discussion paper for the UN Climate Change Conference in Copenhagen, and endorsed the final copy
- APA provided feedback on working documents and information on APA policies and activities combating xenophobia, racism and other forms of intolerance for the World Conference Against Racism review
- CoNGO Board meeting in Bangkok, Thailand (represented by APA member living in Thailand)
- CoNGO Board meeting in Vienna, Austria (APA Main Representative)

ROSTER OF NGO REPRESENTATIVES

APA UN/NGO REPRESENTATIVES

Florence Denmark, PhD, UN/NGO Main Representative (term 2005 - 2009)

Robert Scott Pace Distinguished Professor, Psychology Department, Pace University

Florence Denmark served as chair of the APA-UN team and as the Main Representative of the APA team to the UN. As such, she organized and chaired the

monthly APA team meetings, and was coordinator of the annual Psychology Day at the UN. Dr. Denmark's term as chair of the NGO Committee on Ageing ended on September 1. She remains on the NGO Committee on Ageing Executive Committee as the immediate past chair. In June, Dr. Denmark was re-elected to the Executive Committee of the Committee on Mental Health and chairs a working group on Alternative and Extended Families for the Committee on the Family. Dr. Denmark is also a member of the Committee on the Status of Women (CSW). She attended the CoNGO Board meeting in October in Vienna, Austria representing APA.

Deanna Chitayat, PhD, APA UN/NGO Representative (term 2010-2014)

Dean (retired), University College, Hofstra University

Deanna Chitayat is vice-chair of the NGO Committee on HIV/AIDS, Chair of the Subcommittee on Affordable Medications, organizer and Moderator of the World Aids Day Briefing, and point person for all committee programs. Dr. Chitayat is also a member of the Committee on the Status of Women (CSW), involved in CSW54 as a member and on the Planning Committee, and member of the Subcommittee on Women and Climate Change. Her involvement in UNICEF is as a member of the Working Group on Violence Against Children and a Participant in the Working Group on Girls. She is on the APA Planning Committee for Psychology Day and the Search Committee for new UN Team Representatives.

Sherry Dingman, PhD, APA UN/NGO Representative (term 2009-2013)

Marist College, Poughkeepsie, NY 12601

Sherry Dingman worked with UNICEF's Working Group to Stop Violence Against Children and leads its task force to stop child trafficking and exploitation. She has assembled an advisory panel from around the world to discuss the issue and propose solutions. The panel meets online and contributes to a blog (stopchildslavery.org) that is being developed. She has been instrumental in finding a number of translators for a phrase book for Doctors at War, whose head sits on advisory panel. The task force has connected with Restavek Foundation on a project for at-risk children in Haiti that will use non-verbal cartoons to present safety messages and wisdom from groups of West African children who are bonded laborers. She attends UN briefings on events on child trafficking. Dr. Dingman is organizing a subcommittee of the Mental Health committee to build capacity in the least developed nations for the support of families. Assisting her with these projects are two graduate students who attended an event hosted by Division 52 at the annual convention in Toronto. One of the students is from East Africa and the other is from Japan. Dr. Dingman is also hoping to interest the NGO Health Committee in sponsoring a digital health education initiative for sub-Saharan Africa to address the "brain drain." Dr. Dingman recruited student volunteers at her academic institutions who are enthusiastic about helping with these projects. She was active in the 2010 Psychology Day planning committee and organized and chaired a panel on Negotiating Humanitarian Access as part of that program. She also attended meetings of the committees for Indigenous Peoples, Health and Human Rights.

Susan Nolan, PhD, APA UN/NGO Representative (term 2009-2013)

Seton Hall University, Department of Psychology

Susan Nolan is a member of the NGO Committee on Sustainable Development (CSD), the NGO Committee on Social Development, and the NGO Committee on Mental Health, where she serves on a subcommittee on mental health, racism, and other intolerances. She also attended meetings of the Committee on Mental Health,

and joined its Subcommittee on Racism and Other Intolerances. She attended meetings of the CSW when they did not conflict with her other committee meetings. In addition, Susan attended the UN Women's Ambassador luncheon in October with other members of the APA Team and wrote an article for the October issue of *Psychology International* on psychology and climate change, in particularly highlighting the work of the Committee on Sustainable Development.

Janet A. Sigal, PhD, APA UN/NGO Representative (term 2006-2010)

Farleigh Dickinson University, Department of Psychology

Janet Sigal was elected co-chair of the Family Committee in May 2009, and also serves as vice chair of the UNICEF Working Group on Violence Against Children. She was on the Planning Committee for the 2010 Psychology Day on the Planning Committee for the 2009 International Day of Older Persons, and represented the NGO Committee on the Family at the CoNGO Civil Society Development Forum. Dr. Sigal coordinates the APA-UN interns program.

SPECIAL PROJECTS ASSOCIATES

Neal S Rubin, PhD, Argosy University, Chicago (Term 2009)

Neal Rubin attended meetings of the NGO Committee on the Family, the Committee for Indigenous Peoples, and a UNICEF study group on Children and Violence. He served as the recorder for the APA team's monthly meetings, and contributed information about APA's work as conference presentations and newsletter articles.

Norma Plavnick Simon, EdD (Term 2009)

Norma Simon was elected Member-at-Large on the Executive Committee of the NGO Committee on Mental Health, and serves on that committee's Workgroup on Trauma. Dr. Simon was elected Recording Secretary on the Committee on Ageing and was active on the 2009 International Day of Older Persons (IDOP) Committee. She also serves on the Planning Committee for Psychology Day.

STUDENT INTERNS

APA's student interns at the UN work closely work with APA representatives. Rojita Abulum, Kaori Kato, and Lee Vuong-Holland completed their internships June 30th, 2009. New interns selected for the Academic Year 2009-2010 included Cidna Valentin, (Clinical PhD program, City University of New York), Jane Dewey (Counseling psychology PhD program, Seton Hall University), Nita Makhija (Counseling psychology PhD program, Seton Hall University) and Yuki Shigemoto (Clinical Psychology Master's program, Penn State University, technology intern).

The activities of the UN interns include assisting in the planning and implementation of the International Day of Older Persons and Psychology Day, attending UN sessions on topics relevant to psychology such as mental health, the family, human trafficking, and being involved with the activities of committees and working groups. Yuki Shigemoto, the technology intern, plans to start a blog for working group activities, and to help develop digital instructional materials.

For more information please see www.apa.org/international/un