



## UNYSA Youth Council

Leading the youth wing of the United Nations Association of the UK

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### What is UNYSA?

The UN Youth & Students Association (UNYSA) is the youth wing of UNA-UK. UNYSA brings together young people (university, college and school students) from across the UK who are passionate about the need for a strong, credible and effective United Nations.

Our activities focus on building understanding of and support for the UN and its work to promote international peace and security, development and human rights for all. We run nationwide campaigns on issues such as the Millennium Development Goals and conflict prevention. We also support career development through resources and networking events. In addition, we have 40 UNYSA branches across the UK that regularly run their own events and campaigns.

UNA-UK supports these efforts by supplying UNYSA activists with free copies of its magazine, fresher's fair resources and advice on event organisation.

*"UNYSA is not only a way into UNA-UK and its Young Professionals Network. Nor is it just a first step to embarking on an exciting international career. Because its work is shaped by its members, it is also a way for young people to acquire tangible leadership skills they can use throughout their lives."*

Marco Moraes, final year student at the London School of Economics, President of UNYSA Youth Council and member of the UNA-UK Board of Directors, 2008-09

### What is UNA-UK?

UNA-UK, UNYSA's parent organisation, is the UK's leading independent policy authority on the United Nations and a vibrant grassroots membership organisation with a supporter base throughout the UK. UNA-UK is committed to a strong, credible and effective UN at the centre of an international system governed by cooperation and the rule of law.

With formal constitutional status, UNYSA is an integral component of UNA-UK's structure. It has a seat on the UNA-UK Board of Directors, and accredited UNYSA groups have voting rights at UNA-UK's annual conference, where policy is debated.

### What is the Youth Council?

UNYSA is student-led. Its yearly agenda is set by a volunteer Youth Council, elected annually.

The Youth Council is responsible for leading UNYSA's work nationally. Collectively, its members carry out activities in support of UNYSA's aims:

- promoting a stronger, more credible and more effective UN
- helping UNA-UK achieve policy and campaign goals
- strengthening youth participation at the UN
- fostering awareness of global issues and understanding between people and cultures

Youth Council members act as the 'public face' of UNA-UK's youth wing. Being on the Youth Council is not only great for your CV; you also get:

- to be an ambassador for development, human rights and international peace
- priority invitations to UNA-UK's high-level events (last year, the Youth Council was invited to a private reception with the UN Secretary-General when he delivered his first major public speech in the UK)
- to play a key role in the governance of UNA-UK through UNYSA's seat on the UNA-UK Board of Directors
- the opportunity to work closely with UNA-UK staff, its Board of Directors and its Young Professionals Network



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### Youth Council roles

All members of the Youth Council are responsible for the planning and arranging of all national UNYSA activities, including the UNYSA Annual Conference. But there is some division of labour, with different members assigned core tasks.

The core tasks per officer are outlined below. This is not an exhaustive list. In practice, the Youth Council is heavily shaped by those who are elected to it.

#### President

- Organising and chairing regular Youth Council meetings
- Building relationships with external organisations to further the aims of UNYSA
- Representing UNYSA on the UNA-UK Board of Directors

#### Vice-President

- Deputising for the President
- Ensuring information-sharing between the Youth Council, UNYSA branches and UNYSA's partner organisations, including working with UNA-UK on the UNYSA website
- Leading on the governance of UNYSA, including by ensuring that all agendas, minutes and key documents are recorded and disseminated as appropriate

#### Regional Development Coordinator and Deputy (2 positions)

- Running the UNYSA Regional Development Programme
- Building branch capacity by liaising with branch regional representatives on a regular basis
- Developing and leading collaborative projects between individual UNYSA groups and in keeping with UNA-UK's policy aims

#### Campaigns and Policy Officer (2 positions)

- Devising and delivering campaigns and events in consultation with the rest of the Youth Council
- Liaising with UNA-UK to distribute to branches the latest information on UNA-UK campaigns
- Advising branches, together with the Regional Development Coordinators, on how to successfully run events and campaigns

#### Model UN and Education Officer (2 positions)

- Leading UNYSA's Model UN activities, including advising branches on how to run MUNs and promoting UK MUN conferences and activities nationally and internationally
- Developing UNYSA's Schools Outreach Project and resources
- Promoting UNYSA among MUN societies and in secondary schools and sixth form colleges, including by providing information on how to set up a UNYSA branch

### Why stand for election? The outgoing Youth Council reflects on the year that was...

#### Noorin Dahya, Coopted member

Working side by side with my fellow Youth Council members has strengthened my belief that we really can make a difference. Being on the Council has allowed me to champion the causes I am passionate about, while giving me insight into the intricacies of diplomacy. I will miss being part of it but can't wait to see what our successors will achieve under the wing of UNA-UK.

#### Tuuli Hongisto Campaigns Officer

This year has taught me a lot. It was incredibly rewarding to be part of such a great team and to work on projects like the first European Model Arab League. Personally, I am most proud of my role in organising the conference on water, development and conflict – which turned out to be a great success! I hope UNYSA grows to be even more active in the years to come.

#### Luke Harman Regional Development Coordinator

Working closely with branches to set up regional UNYSA 'hubs' in the South and North has been immensely rewarding. It has made clear to me just how much there is to gain by improving communication. By learning from each other's experiences, we can achieve the common goals that all UNYSA groups share.

#### Avnish Raichura Education Officer

Serving on the Youth Council has been an inspiring experience. I am especially proud to have played a role in enhancing UNYSA's outreach to secondary schools. I hope that my successor will be able to build on my efforts and expand the education programme to cover all UNYSA branches.