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TWICKENHAM and RICHMOND BRANCH
working towards a credible, strong and effective
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Focus on Haiti

The native Arawak Amerindians who inhabited the island of Hispaniola when it was discovered by Columbus in 1492 were virtually annihilated by Spanish settlers within 25 years. In the early 17th century, the French established a presence on Hispaniola and in 1697, Spain ceded to the French the western third of the island, Haiti. The Caribbean colony produced great wealth for France, but only through the transportation of nearly half a million African slaves to work the land's natural resources based on forestry and sugar-related industries. In the late 18th century, Haiti's slaves revolted under Toussaint L'Ouverture and after a prolonged struggle, became the first black republic to declare its independence in 1804. However, the cost of liberty burdened the Haitian people with a fiscal debt that took almost 150 years to repay. The legacy of considerable environmental degradation, economic inertia and a history of political instability and violence has resulted in Haiti being the poorest country in the Western Hemisphere.

United Nations involvement in Haiti started in September 1993 when the Security Council set up the first UN peacekeeping operation in the country and subsequently, authorized the deployment of a 20,000-strong multinational force to facilitate the prompt return of the legitimate Haitian authorities, maintain a secure and stable environment in the country and promote the rule of law. Throughout this period there were a number of positive developments, with the first peaceful hand-over of power between two elected presidents; and the country's sustained embrace of a political culture based on democratic values.

On 12 January 2010, a massive 7.0 magnitude earthquake struck Haiti, reducing much of its capital, Port-au-Prince, to rubble. It was the worst earthquake in the region in more than 200 years with a death toll estimated at over 200,000 people. Huge swathes of the capital lay in total ruin and destruction, with thousands of injured people trapped in the rubble of buildings, schools, hospitals and foreign aid offices including the UN Mission office. The earthquake had caused devastation in Haiti just as it had been making significant strides towards stability and good governance. Successful elections had been held, unprecedented security had been established and strategies for economic growth initiated by a new government and an emergent multifaceted civil society.

The United Nations Special Envoy for Haiti launched the Organization's largest ever appeal to assist 3 million Haitians to overcome the logistical problems in ensuring that vital aid continues to be delivered for the urgent humanitarian relief effort and to maintain social cohesion in an extremely vulnerable environment. Implementation of a long-term strategy for the reconstruction of the country's devastated infrastructure requires continuous support by the international community. Surely, the demoralised and fragile people of Haiti deserve the hope of a positive future for their country.

Sally-Ann Marchan
Editor

CONTENTS

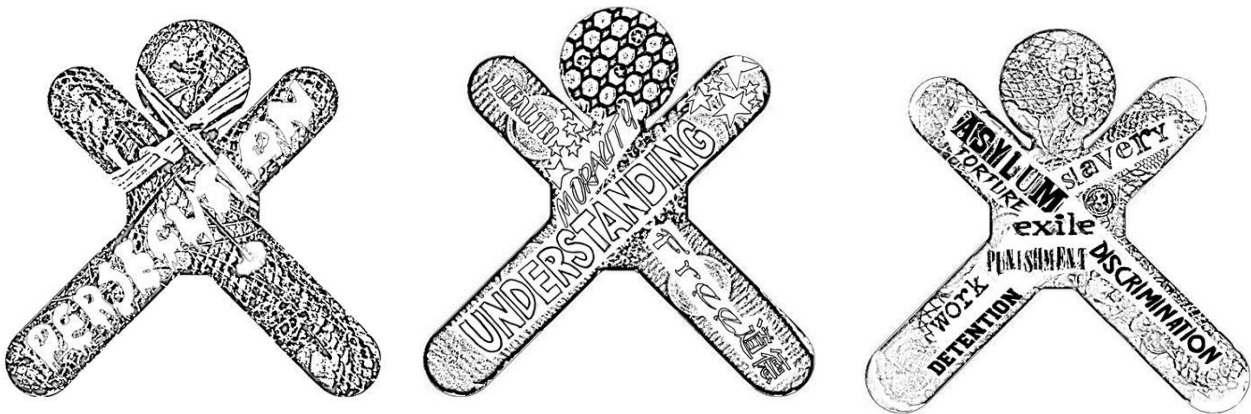
Chairman's Report	...	2
Dates for your Diary	...	2
Memorial Service for Haiti	...	3
News in Brief	...	4
UK Charity Article 52	...	5

CHAIRMAN's REPORT:

This is our first newsletter of the New Year and already we have so much to report which is down to our strong team. We have a wonderful timetable of events this year so please do look at this newsletter or our website for dates and times.

The first main area to report is that our UN/Amnesty new public art, to commemorate the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights, will be launched at York House, Twickenham on Monday 29th March 2010 at 2pm. Sam, the artist, together with Dennis Wilmot and Mary Holmes have done great work by going into local schools to discuss the meaning and relevance of the document with young people and also visiting senior citizens and have succeeded in getting significant input from them. This collaboration has given our association great publicity and credibility and both Dennis and Mary deserve a vote of thanks for their efforts.

Please see below some of the artwork which was proposed and agreed upon to appear on the public art sculpture. The words selected are taken directly from the Declaration of Human Rights.



This new public art will be sited in the pedestrian precinct between York House and Twickenham Civic Centre and will, therefore, be visible from the main road and will, hopefully, will inspire all those who view it. I certainly look forward to seeing a good turn out of TRUNA members at the launch day.

On a personal sad note, I have to mention that as chair I am going to be standing down at the next AGM. I would have done 3 years by this time and feel that I would need to move on so that fresh ideas can come into the group under a new person. I will, however, look forward to helping out in the future so will not be leaving altogether.

Virginia Morris
Chairman

DATES for your DIARY

International Women's Day	...	09 March 2010
London/SE Region Spring Council	...	20 March 2010
Committee Meeting	...	22 March 2010
UN/Amnesty Public Art Launch	...	29 March 2010
Library Talk	...	April 2010 - tbc
Pub Lunch	...	May 2010 - tbc



Memorial Service for the People of Haiti:

On Sunday 14 February 2010, at the request of **TRUNA**, St. Mark's Church, St. Marks Road, Teddington, devoted their morning service to the people of Haiti killed in the recent earthquake; particularly the UN personnel and other charity workers who lost their lives while serving those who lived in that sad land. With hymns and prayers specially chosen to reflect the occasion in the most appropriate way, and flags paraded by the delightful young local Scouts, the address was given by Matthew Carter, Humanitarian Director for CAFOD, (Catholic Fund for Overseas Development).

Matthew carter had returned from Haiti the previous weekend and was able to give a graphic description of the situation there. He had landed in neighbouring Dominican Republic and, leaving its lush green affluence behind, he had motored across a dusty border crossing into the poverty that is Haiti. Driving past a massive white lime quarry that scarred the landscape beside an azure lake, he was struck by how little evidence there was of the earthquake. Perhaps one in every ten houses showed signs of serious damage. Then he arrived in Port au Prince. The air, redolent with the smell of rotting corpses and totally inadequate sanitation, it took an inordinate time to negotiate the gridlocked streets past buildings that had been reduced to rubble, with very few still standing and none left unscathed. Finally arriving at the demolished headquarters of CAFOD, he had to spend his nights on a mat in the courtyard in the company of his fellow workers since no one dared attempt to sleep inside houses that could collapse completely in the next aftershock. Shortly after his arrival he spoke to a friend who worked for the USA equivalent of CAFOD. The man had been working in his office at the time of the earthquake. Within the space of the 60 seconds the earthquake lasted he had rushed outside to avoid being buried alive and was met by the simultaneous scream of terror produced by 3 million throats. Since Port au Prince is built in a bowl-like depression surrounded by hills the sound must have been greatly amplified as it rose to the heavens. Then came the indescribably haunting sound of buildings collapsing, and going on collapsing over an intolerable period. Matthew Carter and his fellow workers did their best to co-ordinate the relief effort in a country where all the hospitals, government buildings, schools, churches were gone and most of the doctors, nurses, government officials, emergency services workers, priests, teachers and utility service workers were dead. Sunday services were said in the courtyards of ruined churches like the once resplendent Cathedral where the corpse of the Archbishop of Port au Prince had been dug out to be mourned by the people he had once served.

Matthew Carter was very definite that the future of Haiti must be left in the hands of its people without undue interference from the outside world, which is rightly seeking to help in a spirit of pity and solidarity. All over the world there are laudable efforts to raise money and to send much-needed items and services to help re-build the land which struggled out of slavery to independence in 1804 but continued to be burdened by debt beyond 1947 when the last instalment of the price of freedom from France was paid. Haiti must not languish in intense poverty in the future while other nations ignore its plight but it must not be forced to dance to the tune of international power structures that might try to influence its decisions.

At the end of the service a Retiring Collection was taken up and Matthew Carter assured all present that every penny would go directly to help the people of Haiti and would not be used by some fat cat to maintain his limousine or provide gold taps for his palatial mansion.

Olivia Richardson

TRUNA Committee Vacancy:

Currently, the office of Publicity Officer is vacant and the Committee welcome any prospective candidates to apply directly to Olivia Richardson or email to info@truna.uk - this is a vital role to raise the profile of **TRUNA** and a wonderful opportunity to get actively involved.



News in Brief:

TRUNA members braved particularly bad weather to collect at Twickenham station for **UNICEF / UNA** in November last year. The rain was coming sideways and at high speed and the gusts of wind occasionally blew over our collection buckets when placed temporarily on the ground, even when they were relatively full of coins.

The collectors all deserved extra thanks for not just turning up but for persevering in the circumstances and I think they got the sympathy vote from the Rugby crowd as the collection was on the high side at £965.48.

We were indeed fortunate to have gained another opportunity to collect again at Twickenham. This was a sell-out England v Wales match on 6th February 2010 although with a much later kick-off time. An extra shift to accommodate meant more collectors and a better total collection of £1,450.55. This is a case where the more collectors there are, the more is collected so new collectors are very welcome. A very big thank you to everyone involved! Please do contact me on the following telephone numbers if you can help:

Home: 020 8977 9434 Work: 020 8814 3212 Mobile: 07879 641032

Dennis Wilmot

All the Fun of the Fair at the 'Twickenham Green Charities Fair'!

Once again **TRUNA** will be present with a stall at the Charities Fair on Twickenham Green on Bank Holiday Monday, 31 May 2010. This event is an excellent opportunity to raise vital funds and, perhaps even more importantly, to raise awareness of **UNA** and the work of the **UN** in an enjoyable atmosphere.

Apart from good weather, two things are needed to ensure success: offers of help to run the stall and plenty of goods to sell. If you can help for one of the three shifts between 8.30am and 3.30pm and/or can provide good quality bric-a-brac, books, cakes, preserves et cetera to sell, then I would love to hear from you.

Even if you can't help this time, a visit to the fair makes a pleasant outing and remember to please stop and say hello as you pass the stall. Please email: evans39@gotadsl.co.uk or call me on: **020 8898 4850**.

Hilary Evans

Kingston Peace Council/CND has organised a talk and discussion on nuclear power as part of this year's 'Think in Kingston'. The speaker will be Dr David Lowry and the event will take place on Thursday 11 March, 7.30pm in C-SCAIPE at Kingston University. For information and details on other events please visit the website: www.kingston.gov.uk/think-in-kingston

TRUNA members work to support

Peace and Security / Humanitarian Affairs / Economic and Social Development

Human Rights and International Law

For further details contact:

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View our website | www.truna.org.uk

Email us | info@truna.org.uk



The UK Built Environment Charity Article 25:

- (1) Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services, and the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood, old age or other lack of livelihood in circumstances beyond his control.
- (2) Motherhood and childhood are entitled to special care and assistance. All children, whether born in or out of wedlock, shall enjoy the same social protection.

Article 25, Universal Declaration of Human Rights

Article 25 is an operational UK registered charity that designs, builds and manages projects to provide better shelter wherever there is disaster, poverty or need. Article 25 provides built environment professional expertise; we work alongside aid organisations, NGOs, and communities around the world. Our mission is to bring experienced, field-appropriate professional skills and academically rigorous research findings to NGOs engaged in building work. Our role is the responsible stewardship of the building process from start to finish. We bring value to our partners and beneficiaries by early inclusive consultation with end users; addressing vulnerability by encouraging local skills and building technical capacity; empowering local communities to lead long-term recovery and rehabilitation; commitment to environmentally sustainable and resource-efficient practices; rigorous consideration of local materials, economy, labour, climate and environment, and strict control of building costs to make best use of donor funds while giving the best possible built solution.

Article 25 will be in Haiti from 08 to 18 March 2010 as the country starts rebuilding their future. Article 25 is committed to long term development in countries affected by disaster and poverty. Earthquakes don't kill people, the poorly constructed buildings kill people. Prior to this earthquake Haiti suffered from 5 cyclones within 10 years and never had the opportunity properly to rebuild. Article 25 will be in Haiti building disaster resistant buildings to protect livelihoods for the long term.

Article 25 provides technical design expertise that is unavailable in Haiti. We have a team of architects, engineers and surveyors to work with local partners and the global aid agencies on the ground, providing technical assistance wherever needed in the reconstruction effort.

Since its inception in 2006, Article 25 has completed 30 assignments worldwide. Please visit their website for further details of their work and information about how you as an individual may contribute your professional expertise: www.article-25.org

TRUNA Newsletter Carbon Footprint:

We appreciate that most members prefer to read the latest issue in print form and they will continue to receive the newsletter as always, by post or by hand delivery. However, in an effort to help reduce our carbon footprint, members are invited to opt to receive the newsletter in electronic form simply by registering their email address at info@truna.com.

TRUNA Committee Members :

Chairman	-	Virginia Morris	
Vice Chairman	-	Margaret Rayner	
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