

UN Special

REPORT ON RECENT CHANGES

Immigration law

N°760 – JUIN 2016

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Nous sommes tous reconnaissants pour le privilège de vivre en Suisse. Nous voudrions croire que nous sommes les bienvenus et contribuons de façon tangible à la société suisse. Cependant, le statut de fonctionnaire international à Genève doit être analysé au travers d'un kaléidoscope plus large.

La Suisse a toujours été un acteur important dans l'architecture multilatérale mondiale, mais n'a rejoint l'ONU qu'en 2012. Son gouvernement affirme fièrement que: «Malgré la relativement petite taille de la Suisse, la Genève internationale lui permet de jouer dans la «Cour des Grands» sur la scène internationale, ce qui facilite l'atteinte de ses objectifs en matière de politique étrangère»¹. Si l'on extrapole cette perspective au microcosme du droit de l'immigration, les choses se compliquent. La question de la naturalisation est souvent au premier plan de discussions politiques reposant sur une perception erronée d'une population étrangère trop nombreuse.

Cette édition explore les changements du droit de la nationalité suisse et leur impact pour les fonctionnaires internationaux, composante essentielle de la Genève internationale, au travers de cinq articles et une page centrale sur ce sujet brûlant. Ce numéro comprend également des articles sur le courage dans les missions de maintien de la paix, la participation de la société civile dans l'Examen périodique universel des droits de l'homme et une défense d'Umoja.

Nous restons fiers de la contribution positive de la Genève internationale à l'échelle locale et nationale, et nous réjouissons de vos retours sur ce nouveau numéro! ■

¹ Site internet du Département fédéral des affaires étrangères suisse

Regardless of how long we have lived in Switzerland, we are grateful for this privilege granted to us by the UN and our host country. We would like to think we are welcome here and contribute tangibly to Swiss society. However, being a diplomat or international civil servant in Geneva should be viewed with a wider kaleidoscope.

Switzerland has historically been a prominent actor in the global multilateral architecture, but joined the UN only in 2012. Its government proudly states that: *'Despite Switzerland's relatively small size, thanks to "International Geneva" the Confederation is able to "box above its weight" in the international arena, making it that much easier to achieve foreign policy objectives'*¹. Now, if you extrapolate this positive outlook to the microcosm of immigration law, things become complicated. This issue is at the forefront of political discussions alongside the erroneous perception of an overly numerous foreign population.

This edition explores the changes in Swiss citizenship law from the perspective of international civil servants at the UN, a core component of International Geneva, through five articles and a centerfold on this hot topic.

This issue also covers topics as diverse as bravery in UN peacekeeping missions, civil society participation in the Human Rights Universal Periodic Review, and a defense of Umoja (*yes, not everything is negative!*). Overall, we remain proud of the positive contribution of International Geneva to the local community and Switzerland in general. Let us know what you think of this new edition! ■

¹ Website of the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs

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Recent changes in Swiss citizenship law

What are the implications for international civil servants?

In June 2014, the Swiss Parliament modified the law regarding the conditions to obtain Swiss citizenship.

NICOLAS MOSSAZ, LAWYER, OCHSNER & ASSOCIÉS

The change made to Swiss citizenship law reflects the Parliament's wish to facilitate the obtention of Swiss citizenship for foreign residents who are well integrated in Switzerland. Therefore, some significant changes will take place in 2017 with the enforcement of the new Swiss Citizenship Federal law (LN).

Civil servants working for international organizations usually benefit from a "carte de légitimation" while their spouse and dependents may be granted a permit Ci giving them the right to live and work in Switzerland. These titles of stay are issued by the Permanent Mission of Switzerland to the United Nations Office in Geneva and not by the administrative authority responsible for residence matters, which in Geneva, is the OCP (Office Cantonal de la Population).

Under the current law, expatriates holding a "carte de légitimation" or a Ci permit are entitled to apply for Swiss citizenship provided that they have been living in Switzerland for a minimum of twelve years, of which they have spent at least three out of the last five years on Swiss territory. However, the new law will affect these

current conditions to apply for Swiss citizenship.

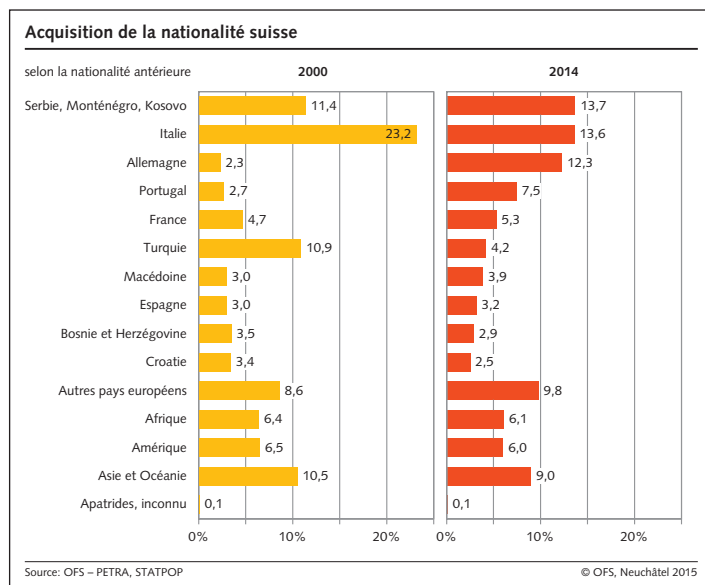
What are the changes?

The new law implies two major changes affecting the number of years of residence in Switzerland to qualify for citizenship and the type of permit required. First, ten years instead of the current twelve are required as a minimum residency duration. Secondly, only residents holding a C Permit will be able to apply for the naturalization process. Moreover, applicants are required to have lived in the same canton for a period of two to five years without interruption, depending on the requirements of the canton.

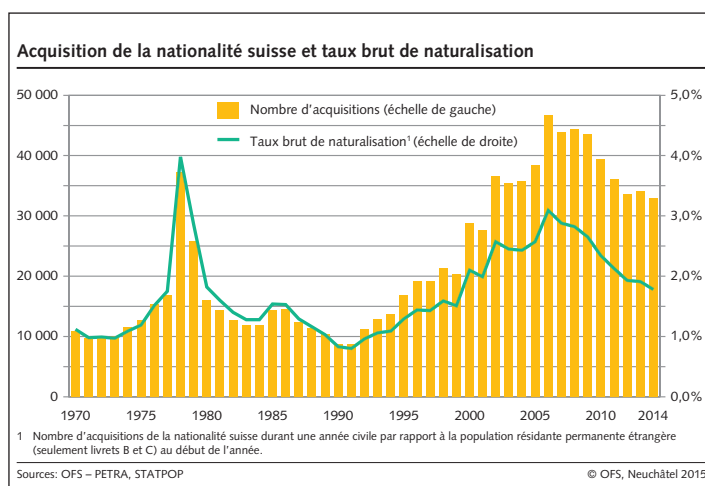
Thus, obtaining Swiss citizenship no longer relies on how long a person has been residing in Switzerland, but it also depends on the nature of the resident's permit. Therefore, this key point will significantly impact UN staff and their families, who wish to obtain Swiss citizenship under the new law.

Consequences of the law changes for UN staff and expatriates

The change of residency duration means shorter naturalization periods for current residents holding a Permit C. Residents having lived for ten years in Switzerland will be



The largest numbers of naturalizations are issued from European migrants from neighboring countries, holders of C permits.



Strict criteria for naturalization have discouraged many foreign residents to apply for the Swiss nationality. Applications from EU nationals have decreased after Switzerland signed bilateral agreements in 2002 entitling EU citizens to work and reside freely in Switzerland.

able to apply for the citizenship without having to wait twelve years. However, residents who do not hold a Permit C will have to obtain such permit first before being able to apply for Swiss citizenship.

The whole problem is that, to this date, a “carte de légitimation” or Ci permit does not confer to its holder any rights with regard to ordinary residence law, and in particular obtaining a Permit C. In short, once the new law comes into effect, holders of a “carte de

légitimation” or of a Ci permit will no longer have access to Swiss citizenship. They will be entitled, however, provided that they fulfil formal requirements, to file an application for naturalization once they have lost their international status as the practice of the Swiss authorities, in place for many years, is to facilitate stays in Switzerland for international officials who have ceased their duties.

This implies that expatriates not holding a Permit C planning to apply for Swiss citizenship

would be well inspired to start the process this year, if they meet the twelve year residency requirement, to avoid being penalized by the new law. Until the new law comes into force – likely early 2017 – the current conditions apply (art. 50).

Conditions to become a Swiss citizen

Despite the residency duration being shortened, Swiss nationality remains one of the most difficult citizenships to obtain. The Swiss authorities require high standards based on the merit of future citizens rather than their number. Applicants need to remain patient and determined, as Swiss citizenship is not granted automatically once the years of residency completed.

As it is the case with the current law, the new law will require candidates to demonstrate successful integration in Switzerland. In order to do so, applicants must fulfil a series of conditions, such as proving that they are familiar with Swiss customs and traditions, demonstrating their integration in the country, respecting the laws, public security and the values of the Federal Constitution and so on. And that's not all. Following The Swiss Parliament's decision, oral knowledge of a single national language will not be sufficient anymore. Applicants will also have to demonstrate that they are able to write in at least one national language.

How to maximize chances of a successful application?

Expatriates living in the Lake Geneva region sometimes suffer prejudice for not making enough effort to interact with the local population. Thus, applicants should not hesitate to interact as much as possible with local residents, for example by joining a sports club, a cultural association or participating in the

various activities organized in Geneva. Of course, it is very useful to follow local newspapers, such as *Tribune de Genève*, *Le Matin* or *Le Temps*. When it comes to assessing the integration level of a candidate, every detail matters. Whenever they have the opportunity, applicants should not hesitate to take the necessary steps to obtain the right to vote at the communal level. In Geneva, foreign nationals legally residing in Switzerland for at least 8 years may exercise the right to vote in communal matters. Undertaking this process could prove valuable when the authorities assess the application of the candidate as part of the naturalization process. Also, candidates should remember that authorities will ask them to list five Swiss references living in Geneva. This point should not be overlooked as it is a prerequisite to filing a complete application.

Applicants should be prepared for a one to one interview, during which they will be assessed on their degree of integration. Candidates should expect to be interviewed on a wide range of subjects, being aware that there are no set guidelines on the way the interview will be conducted.

Each applicant must go through the process of a test on general knowledge about Switzerland. Candidates can prepare themselves on the relevant website¹

To sum up, the key is good preparation. Even if these conditions may seem a little daunting, applicants should keep in mind that with a well-prepared file, and a little patience, there is every chance the application will be successful. In this respect, it is worth noting that Geneva authorities have repeatedly stated that they were encouraging UN members having the possibility to do so to submit their application before the end of 2016.

Conclusion

To conclude, 2016 represents a turning point for the expatriate community living in Geneva and planning to become Swiss. The new law could penalize expatriates not able to obtain a Permit C who wish to acquire the Swiss citizenship in the near future. Geneva holds a large number of UN staff and their dependents who have been living in Switzerland for a number of years and who are well integrated. The key issue revolves around the granting of the Permit C for these residents. Obtaining the Permit C is an indicator of integration for Swiss citizenship and constitutes a centerpiece of the new law. Therefore, the situation is problematic for Swiss authorities. The question of fairness has been raised by UN unions and representatives and is currently being debated.

In the absence of clarification about the conditions of obtaining of the Permit C for UN staff and their relatives, expatriates who meet the current citizenship conditions are encouraged to apply this year before the changes take place. Geneva has seen an increasing number of Swiss citizenship applications from the expatriate community in the past months and this number will keep rising until the new law comes into force. ■

Nicolas Mossaz is a partner at the law firm Ochsner & Associés. He has extensive experience helping expatriates and foreign companies based in the Geneva area. Nicolas runs the website Legal Expat Geneva (www.legalexpatgeneva.com).

1 www.ge.ch/connaitre-la-suisse.

New article 9 of the Federal Act on the Acquisition and Loss of Swiss Citizenship :

Art. 9 Formal conditions :

1. The Confederation grants the authorization of naturalization only if, at the time of the application submission, the applicant meets the following requirements:
 - a. he/she is the beneficiary of a permanent residency permit;
 - b. he/she proves that he/she has been living in Switzerland for a total of ten years, where the three years prior the application have been spent on Swiss territory.
2. During the period of ten years mentioned in subparagraph 1, let. b, the time spent in Switzerland between the age of 8 and 18 counts double. However, the actual stay must have lasted at least six years.



The advertisement features a young child with short brown hair, wearing a red t-shirt, drinking water from a clear glass. The child is positioned in the center-right of the frame, with their head tilted back. The background is a soft-focus indoor setting with a window and some greenery visible on the left. In the bottom right corner, there is a blue rectangular logo with the text 'L'EAU' in white and a circular emblem containing a yellow sun and the letters 'SIG'.


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Swiss Parliament debates the nationality law

Do the Swiss still want us?

A new nationality law, anti-immigrant rhetoric on the rise, UN organizations leaving Geneva or threatening to leave. Is the relationship between the Swiss and the UN as strong as it once was, and are the UN and its staff still welcome in Switzerland?

IAN RICHARDS, EXECUTIVE SECRETARY, UNOG STAFF COORDINATING COUNCIL

Last October, 18,000 locals crowded the Palais des Nations for its open day, timed to coincide with the organization's 70th anniversary, with everyone from children to grandparents present, it was a remarkable turnout. But 70 years after the UN was welcomed to the Palais des Nations, do the Swiss still want the UN?

This month marks two years since the parliament in Bern passed a new naturalization law that specifically excludes holders of a *carte de legitimisation*, such as UN staff and their families, from being able to apply for Swiss nationality. This measure was approved

by all parties and without opposition by Geneva's parliamentary representatives.

The law won't come into effect until next year, leaving open a soon-to-close window for those wishing to

obtain a Swiss passport, but has already been sorely felt.

An informational meeting held in the Palais last year on the issue brought 230 worried staff. Among the stories heard were those of children who had grown up in Geneva, spoke fluent French, volunteered in local activities and participated sports clubs, but would miss the cut-off date by months. Others spoke of siblings separated by becoming eligible to apply for nationality on either side of the 1 January 2017 deadline.

While the meeting was internal and for UN staff only, its topic proved controversial and became the subject of a complaint to the UN by the Swiss

federal government.

Yet not all levels of Swiss government share the

same view on the legislative changes. Bernard Gut, Director of the *Office cantonal de la population et des migrations*

The cantonal authorities recently complained that the new nationality law would negatively affect Geneva's demographic make-up.

acknowledged the scale of the problem, telling TV channel RTS that, “with the implementation of the law [international civil servants] first have to obtain a C permit, which will be extremely complicated. We are encouraging them to get naturalized before 1 January 2017.”

However, it isn’t only passport matters that have UN staff scratching their heads about their changing relationship with Switzerland. Compared to other duty stations, Swiss hospitality has at times seemed short. While in Vienna, the local government installed a crèche within the UN compound, Swiss authorities have appeared to drag their feet over an initial commitment to assist in obtaining planning permission for a Geneva equivalent, despite not having been asked, unlike in Vienna, to

contribute any funds.

In April, a UN staff member riding a scooter, was stopped by police for using an incorrect foreign driving license. He and his passenger were held in police cells for seven hours before being released, a treatment judged to be harsh and possibly related to their being UN staff. This closely followed a recent incident in which a member of a prominent OHCHR human rights committee was treated inappropriately at the Servette police post.

UN staff have also had to contend with what has been perceived as a rise in xenophobia in the country. During a certain period, colleagues taking public transport or travelling around the city faced political campaign posters featuring black sheep being kicked off the Swiss flag and a black hand trying to get

Geneva’s international sector accounts for 8.6 percent of its economy and five percent of its population.

hold of a Swiss passport. While not targeted at UN staff, it made many feel uncomfortable.

This new attitude to UN staff is hard to understand. According to the foreign ministry’s own statistics, presented in a white paper to parliament in November 2014, Geneva’s international sector accounts for 8.6 percent of its economy and five percent of its population. Employees in the international sector spend 2.9 billion Swiss francs annually in the local economy.

Ten years ago, the international sector seemed less important. However, with Geneva’s finance


sector quietly shrinking under pressure from new global rules on tax cooperation, and locally-based multinationals halting new investment following a ballot initiative to restrict immigration, the international sector remains relatively stable, for the time-being at least.

But with the strong Swiss franc and the hosting of a UN agency now seen as the pinnacle of municipal achievement by mayors around the world, the Swiss-UN relationship has been put further to the test.

Budapest, Kuala Lumpur, Amman, Incheon, Bonn and even pricey Copenhagen and New York have attracted posts away from Geneva. Copenhagen, with a purposely built but half-empty complex called UN City, has tried particularly hard,

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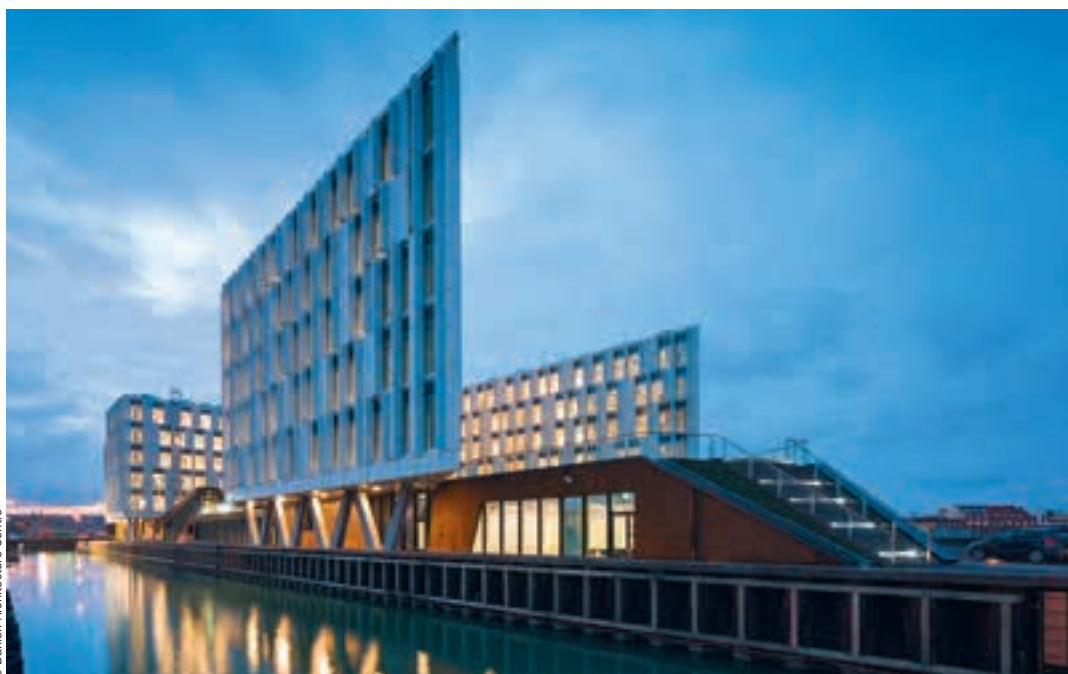
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Swiss authorities visit the Palais des Nations in Geneva.



Denmark, inaugurated in 2013. Its two campuses house nine UN agencies, with a total of 1,200 employees from 104 countries, making it the sixth largest UN campus in the world. The city was built with a focus on sustainability and environmental friendliness.

actively lobbying several UN agencies and offering to cover building and removal costs; Denmark's permanent representative went public with the offer on Swiss television. UNHCR, which has recently seen its headcount in Geneva reduce from 1,200 to 700, was the latest to move posts to Denmark.

Meanwhile India and the UAE were, at the time of writing, asking the International Telecommunications Union to study alternative options to a \$150 million renovation

of the organization's Geneva headquarters, and have offered to host it. And at the opening ceremony of the Inter-agency games, the mayor of Malaga publicly announced that he was seeking to attract a UN agency to the Costa del Sol as part of his city's urban renewal.

The political climate in Switzerland hasn't helped. While much attention has focused on the actions of the right-wing UDC, a successful ballot initiative brought by Geneva's left-wing parties against the expansion of the World Trade

Organization into parkland, and which imposed restrictions on the expansion plans of other organizations, gave the impression that Geneva's population now saw the international sector as a hindrance rather than a benefit. It also raised the level of political risk in what is seen as a legislatively-stable country. The impact of the vote should not be underestimated. So worried was the international sector about it that the WTO and other organizations urged their Swiss staff to vote against the initiative.

Publicly, authorities seem relaxed about the situation. Olivier Couteau, who oversees the international sector for the canton of Geneva told Swiss radio last year that "if we look at overall staff numbers, they remain stable." Highlighting that Geneva benefitted from bringing together a critical mass of key players, he added, "I don't think any international organization would today want to move away their strategic management functions."

Yet parts of the Swiss government, driven most evidently by

its mission in New York, have been taking a more active role to revive the relationship. The UN General Assembly was the scene of hard lobbying last autumn as the Swiss sought to convince various countries, including a reluctant United States which was considering its own UN expansion plans in New York, to finance half the costs of the Palais des Nations renovations. Switzerland offered to provide a 400 million CHF loan for the other half. A similar offer was made to the WHO, also about to enter renovations.

A cynic might argue that the relationship is all about the money. Many of the arguments made at the Swiss parliament for approving the loan, focused not on the diversity that UN staff brought to Geneva, but on how much they spent and on how the UN's presence in Geneva contributed to Switzerland's outsize influence in the world. Meanwhile, a heavily critical audit report of the *Fondation des immeubles pour les organisations internationales*, the body that will administer the loans, was kept from public view while the General Assembly considered Switzerland's offer. It took for the financial manna to be put under threat for renovation funds to be stumped up.

This reactive approach was last seen when the German government was looking for UN agencies to fill empty offices in Bonn. UN Volunteers moved, but the WTO stayed after the Swiss made a number of offers, including the opening of a duty-free shop for staff at P-5 and above (although Vienna and Nairobi have always had such a facility and for all staff) and the granting of Ci permits for dependents of UN staff to be able to work freely in the local job market.

Some believe the relationship

should go much further than the transactional. UNOG Director-General Michael Møller, for example, has made it his mission to bring Switzerland and the international sector closer together, receiving parliamentary delegations, holding press briefings, hosting escalade runners in the Palais grounds and sending a bus filled with information on the UN to every canton in the country. He has also worked closely with the Swiss to bring a series of high-level negotiations to the Palais. For his efforts, he was last month

awarded a medal by the city of Geneva.

Møller isn't alone and there are many in Geneva, Bern and New York who think the same way, including the 18,000 who flocked to the Palais on open day. If they prevail, the presence of the UN and its staff in Geneva may come to be seen as more than a by-product of Switzerland's economic and foreign policy interests. What we don't need is another another organization upping sticks and leaving before consciences awake. ■



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La croix et la bannière pour obtenir le passeport à croix blanche?

Le 10 novembre 2014, le Parlement fédéral suisse adoptait la nouvelle loi (nLN) sur la nationalité suisse. Entretien avec le Département fédéral des affaires étrangères.



PRISCA CHAQUI, UNOG

Cette nouvelle loi sonne le glas de l'ancienne procédure qui permettait aux fonctionnaires internationaux détenteurs d'une carte de légitimation délivrée par le Département fédéral des affaires étrangères (DFAE) et les membres de leur famille de demander la nationalité suisse après un séjour en Suisse de 12 ans à condition qu'ils remplissent les critères exigés par la loi de 1952. La nLN a introduit divers changements de taille dont un qui affecte les fonctionnaires internationaux à savoir, être détenteur d'une autorisation d'établissement (Permis C) pour pouvoir aspirer à la naturalisation.

Sur une note plus positive, il est important de rappeler que la nLN n'est censée entrer en vigueur qu'au printemps 2017, et par conséquent tous les fonctionnaires remplissant les critères tel que stipulés par l'ancien texte peuvent encore aspirer à devenir citoyen suisse. Comme la loi n'a pas d'effet rétroactif, toutes les demandes reçues avant la date d'entrée en vigueur de la nLN seront régies par l'ancien régime.

Au vu de ces changements considérables, la nouvelle de l'adoption de la nLN n'a certes pas été accueillie à bras ouverts dans les rangs des fonctionnaires internationaux, bien au contraire elle a suscité maints émois et questionnements. Les associations du personnel dans les différentes organisations internationales, y compris le Conseil de coordination du personnel de l'Office des Nations Unies à Genève, ont essayé par diverses voies de relayer les préoccupations des fonctionnaires aux différentes parties prenantes. Cependant, il leur a été clairement signifié que la question ne relevait pas du tout de leur ressort, puisqu'elle concerne les relations entre leurs organisations respectives et la Suisse en tant qu'Etat hôte. C'est pourquoi nous avons approché le Service de presse du DFAE afin de sonder l'opinion dudit Département sur la question.

Il semble que depuis l'annonce de l'adoption de la nLN, beaucoup de fonctionnaires, remplissant les critères tels que fixés par l'ancienne loi, se sont précipités pour demander la nationalité. Avez-vous noté une hausse significative du nombre de fonctionnaires naturalisés suisses depuis l'annonce de l'adoption de la nLN?

Nous n'avons pas de statistiques en matière de naturalisation, qui tiennent compte du profil du requérant et particulièrement du type d'autorisation de séjour dont ce dernier bénéficie. Il nous est par conséquent impossible de confirmer une telle constatation.

Etre détenteur d'un permis C est l'une des exigences de la nLN pour remplir les critères de la naturalisation. N'y voyez-vous pas une discrimination à l'égard des fonctionnaires internationaux à un moment où la Suisse s'enorgueillit d'être le bastion de la défense des droits de l'homme?

Les fonctionnaires internationaux et les membres de leur famille autorisés à les accompagner sont admis en Suisse sur la base de la loi sur l'Etat hôte, et ce dans le but d'exercer des fonctions officielles, respectivement d'accompagner une personne exerçant des fonctions officielles. Ils ne sont ainsi pas soumis aux conditions d'entrée et de séjour applicables aux autres étrangers désirant vivre en Suisse, qui sont définies par la loi sur les étrangers. Il en découle que le titre de séjour (la carte de légitimation) qui leur est remis à ces fins est

également soumis à des conditions différentes et qu'il est, en particulier, lié à l'exercice des fonctions officielles en Suisse pour le compte de l'organisation internationale concernée. À la fin de leurs fonctions officielles, les fonctionnaires internationaux qui souhaitent rester en Suisse peuvent déposer une demande d'autorisation de séjour conformément à la loi sur les étrangers. Cette possibilité est également ouverte aux personnes qui sont entrées en Suisse en tant que personnes accompagnantes et ne peuvent plus bénéficier d'une carte de légitimation, en particulier les enfants.

Ne craignez-vous pas que l'attractivité de Genève, en tant que l'une des principales villes sièges de l'ONU, ne recule dans les rangs des fonctionnaires internationaux au vu de la nLN? Les conditions d'accueil offertes

par la Suisse aux organisations internationales, à leurs fonctionnaires et aux membres de famille de ces derniers visent, dans le cadre légal déterminé par le législateur, à permettre aux organisations internationales d'accomplir, dans les meilleures conditions possibles, les tâches qui leur ont été confiées par les États membres. Elles n'ont pas pour but d'avantager un groupe d'individus par rapport à un autre.

Quel message aimeriez-vous transmettre aux enfants de fonctionnaires internationaux qui sont nés et qui ont grandi en Suisse et qui vont, à terme, se voir privés de la nationalité suisse?

Les fonctionnaires internationaux et les membres de leur famille ont la possibilité, après la fin des fonctions officielles, de demander à pouvoir rester en Suisse aux conditions

déterminées par la loi sur les étrangers. Cette possibilité est ouverte également aux enfants des fonctionnaires internationaux ayant atteint 25 ans et qui dès lors ne sont plus autorisés à bénéficier d'une carte de légitimation. Il appartient aux autorités compétentes de déterminer quel titre de séjour peut leur être remis en application de la loi sur les étrangers. Ils bénéficieront alors des mêmes droits que les autres étrangers admis sur la base de ladite loi et bénéficiant du même titre de séjour. Ils conservent aussi la possibilité de présenter une demande de naturalisation s'ils remplissent les conditions fixées pour tous les étrangers résidant en Suisse. ■



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Helvetiq, a boardgame to learn about Switzerland in a fun way

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Becoming Swiss...

Suggestions on how to acquire knowledge indispensable to becoming Swiss.

SARAH JORDAN, STAFF DEVELOPMENT AND LEARNING SECTION (SDLS), UNOG

One of the current requirements for naturalisation is to pass a test on Swiss history, geography and institutions. Here are some suggestions on how to maximise your chances of acquiring this knowledge, indispensable to becoming Swiss...

Visit the Swiss National Museum at the Château de Prangins in Nyon

There are actually three museums and a collection centre in Switzerland united under the umbrella of the Swiss National Museum. The Château de Prangins in Nyon – only 30 minutes by road from the Palais – is the one closest to Geneva and it presents Swiss history from its beginnings to

the present, giving an insight into Swiss identities and the rich tapestry of the country's history and culture.

Switzerland on the move is the main permanent exhibition at the Château de Prangins and offers visitors a chance to immerse themselves in Swiss history, from the Enlightenment to the beginning of the 20th century. The approach is thematic, examining life in Switzerland in the years from 1750 to 1920 from cultural, political, economic and social perspectives. The second permanent exhibition *Panorama of Swiss history: From the Helvetii to the present* relates Swiss history chronologically from its origins to the present day and focuses on the people

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Swiss cartoonists Mix and Remix summarize Swiss clichés at Swiss National Museum in Nyon

of Switzerland and their activities, from the warrior to the banker. It is divided into three parts: facts, myths and clichés. The latter section pokes fun at Switzerland and its chocolate, banks and cheese, as summarised in a drawing by the Swiss cartoonists Mix and Remix.¹

Visit the Château de Penthes – the Museum of the Swiss Abroad

The Château de Penthes, only walking distance from the Palais, is where to head if you want to swot up on famous Swiss emigrants. For over 45 years, the Museum of the Swiss Abroad has been telling the story of the Swiss and Switzerland differently, through the eyes of men and women who left their homeland – for a while or forever – and made their mark on the wider world.

Originally the museum focused on one aspect of Swiss emigration – foreign military service, but then branched out to explore other socio-professional categories: merchants, bankers, engineers, craftsmen, artists, scientists, explorers, missionaries, diplomats, correspondents, humanitarian delegates and adventurers... Through various exhibitions, visitors can rediscover history and see it in a new light.²

Play Helvetiq – as a board game or using an app on your iPhone

Helvetiq publishes games for children, families and adults in print and digital formats. Their goal is to catch people's attention and make them smile – a very good way to learn! In their own words:

“Our story began in 2008 with a game about Switzerland. The idea was to test people's knowledge of the country in a way that was both instructive and fun. The 3,000 copies we made sold within a month. It was beyond expectations! We realized that people were passionate to learn about Switzerland as long as it was made fun and accessible.”

The company have also launched a version for iPhone – so you can carry on learning about Switzerland in a fun way on the move.

Another current requirement of Swiss naturalisation is to have a level in French corresponding to A2 on the Common European Framework of Reference. Two suggestions for improving your French on the website.³

Enrol on the intensive French course offered by SDLS in August

For the first time this summer, the Staff Development and Learning Section (UNITAR SDLS) will be offering an intensive summer course in intermediate and advanced level French from 15-26 August, two hours a day from 8 a.m. to 10 a.m. for two weeks. This is an opportunity for staff members and/or their spouses to improve their understanding of spoken French and apply what they learn in oral activities and simulations of professional and informal exchanges.⁴

Watch the film *Bienvenue en Suisse* (on YouTube)

Learn about being Swiss – in French. This film caused quite a stir in Switzerland when it was screened in the *Un Certain Regard* section at the 2004 Cannes Film Festival. The scenario: Thierry returns to his native Switzerland after a long absence to attend his grandmother's funeral. He is reunited with his family and finds out that he has inherited two million Swiss francs. There

is just one catch – to receive this sum, he has to take on the Swiss values and way of life he has rejected until now. His Swiss cousin, Aloïs, offers him a crash-course in *Swissness* that is as hilarious as it is informative. And when you have acquired all this knowledge of Switzerland and improved your French:

Test yourself on the Office cantonal de la population (OCP) site – in French only...⁵

The OCP site is where you can find all you need to know about the naturalisation process.⁶ ■

1. <http://www.nationalmuseum.ch/e/prangins/>
2. <http://www.penthes.ch/musee/?lang=en>
3. www.helvetiq.ch
4. <http://learning.unog.ch>
5. www.ge.ch/connaitre-la-suisse
6. <http://ge.ch/population/prestations/naturalisation-ordinaire>

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Témoignage

Retour sur une procédure de naturalisation suisse

*Un membre du personnel
des Nations Unies
nous fait part de
sa récente expérience
de naturalisation suisse.*

AMÉLINE PETERSCHMITT, UNITAR

Qu'est-ce qui vous a motivé à demander la citoyenneté suisse?

Je vis en Suisse depuis 16 ans. J'y suis arrivée à l'âge de 24 ans et j'y ai fait ma vie privée et professionnelle. J'ai aussi l'intention d'y rester pour de nombreuses années encore. Je dois être honnête et reconnaître que je pensais faire la demande de nationalité beaucoup plus tard dans ma vie, mais le changement de la loi et ses conséquences pour les fonctionnaires internationaux m'a poussé à faire la demande beaucoup plus tôt que prévu.

Combien de nationalités détenez-vous?

Maintenant que j'ai la nationalité suisse, j'en aurai deux.

Votre nationalité d'origine influence-t-elle votre décision?

Je dois admettre, au risque de ne pas être politiquement correcte, que le fait d'être ressortissante d'un pays en développement est l'un des motifs qui m'a poussé à prendre la décision de devenir suisse.

Qu'est-ce qui vous a amené en Suisse?

Je suis venue étudier et mon rêve était de

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partir vers les États-Unis. La vie en a fait autrement et je suis restée à Genève. Je ne le regrette pas et je sens que j'ai désormais deux pays, mon pays d'origine et mon pays d'accueil, c'est-à-dire la Suisse.

Quelles sont les étapes principales dans la procédure d'application?

La première étape a consisté à rassembler les documents nécessaires et remplir le formulaire de manière exacte et détaillée. Après cela, j'ai eu l'entretien avec les autorités communales. Il s'agit d'un entretien de forme plus que de substance. La dernière étape fut la cérémonie où j'ai prêté serment. La procédure a duré environ 3 ans.

Avez-vous eu des surprises au cours de la procédure?

La plus grande surprise fut lorsque j'ai reçu un coup de fil de l'Office cantonal de la population où l'on m'a félicité de mon intégration au vu des données contenues dans le dossier et où l'on m'a dit que j'allais bénéficier d'une procédure accélérée et que par conséquent à part l'entretien de forme avec les autorités communales, je n'avais

pas de test de connaissances à passer. Je ne vous cache pas que ma joie était telle que jusqu'à maintenant je ne sais de quelle procédure accélérée il s'agit. En résumé, ce fut une belle surprise inattendue.

Lors de l'entretien, quelle est la question qui vous a le plus surprise?





J'avais eu par le passé un malentendu avec mon voisin. Lors de l'appel téléphonique, l'on m'a demandé si je me souvenais de ce qui s'était passé le dimanche 13 décembre 2010. J'ai dû expliquer la nature du malentendu qui avait été résolu par la suite. Je me suis demandée, pour être honnête, si le respect de la sphère privée existait réellement aux yeux des autorités suisses.

Qu'est-ce qui vous réjouit le plus, maintenant que vous êtes suisse?

Pour être honnête, je suis contente de détenir un passeport qui me permet de voyager partout dans le monde sans restriction. Je suis aussi contente de donner à mes enfants la possibilité de pouvoir étudier et s'installer en Suisse s'ils en font le choix sur le long terme.

Avez-vous des conseils pour les personnes au début de leur application?

Le changement de la loi n'entrera en vigueur qu'en 2017. Il faut absolument profiter de la période restante pour faire une demande de naturalisation si on l'on souhaite devenir suisse et si l'on remplit les critères requis. La loi n'a pas d'effet rétroactif. ■

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Why I became a defender of Human Rights

*Conversation with Venera Sydykova,
Legal Specialist at the Office of
the High Commissioner for Human
Rights in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan.*

**MARIE-JOSÉ ASTRE-DÉMOULIN, SDLS,
UNOG**

“It is difficult to look back at those years of poverty, living with my mother as she slowly died from cancer. I would often have to work after the school day in order to support us. At the age of 12, when I became an orphan, I was about to be sent to an orphanage, but through hard work and thanks to my passion for studying, I managed to get accepted in a school for gifted children,

supported by a Turkish government scholarship.

Three years later, I wrote an essay for a competition and – to my surprise – was selected from 1,500 other children! I was thrilled to discover that I would be representing the youth of Kyrgyzstan at the United Nations General Assembly on children’s rights in New York, accompanied by the first lady of Kyrgyzstan, Ms Akaeva.

This event marked a turning point in my life. Not only was I lucky enough to travel to the US and enter the UN Assembly Hall, but I also had the opportunity to meet Nelson Mandela! In addition to all the emotions these experiences provoked, it was during this trip that I discovered that children had *rights*... Things like adequate housing, education, health or food – and that they could be helped by their governments!

Surprisingly, it had never occurred to me before that children were “entitled” to these things. Therefore, I decided to learn more about how to access these rights. I attended various workshops on the legal aspects of the process as well

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as some sessions on empowerment and leadership. These notions made me understand that I am the decision maker in my life and that within any challenge there is an opportunity. (It was at this point that the words of Albert Einstein became my personal motto).

At the age of 16, I became a certified trainer, conducting different workshops on children's rights in remote areas of my country, keen on spreading legal information and leadership tools to all those who needed them. I taught my attendees that it is possible to achieve any result and that rights can be protected and realized – if (and only if) a person demands that they are respected.

As I was striving for justice, I wanted to become a lawyer. Applying the leadership skills

that I had learnt, I managed to get into a top university in my country. I passed all the exams with the highest scores and therefore received merit-based scholarships and was able to continue my Master's Degree in international law in Italy and in France, as the first Eiffel Excellence Programme fellow from my country.

I came back to my country and worked with international non-governmental and local governmental structures in Kyrgyzstan, mostly intended to support and protect vulnerable groups of people (women, children, refugees, migrants, minorities and people with disabilities), increasing their leadership and employment capacity through education or business.

I also contributed to projects with entities such as UNICEF, OSCE, UNHCR, the Asian Development Bank or USAID. I am particularly glad that I can now play a role within the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights in Central Asia.

"In the middle of difficulties lies opportunity."

Albert Einstein

Memories of myself in childhood, so hungry for help and knowledge, have dramatically influenced my life. My personal and professional values are totally intertwined and I will never be able to consider work as "just" work.

To be honest, I am on maternity leave at the moment, but it is impossible for me to totally disconnect from work. I often think about my own children; I am a mother of 3... (long silence). If anything happened to me, I



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would want them to live in a safe and respectful environment. At least, a better one than what was offered to me as a child.

Now I am one of the best placed persons on earth to be able to help them – and any other child on earth – to get some kind of protection.

This is what makes me happy to live and work!" ■

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My Lesvos Story

156,150 refugees and migrants have arrived by sea on Greek shores this year. Insights from the field.

BORIS CHESHIRKOV, UNHCR

'Nesrin, Nesrin, Nesrin', a doctor repeated her name, to wake her from the deadly grip of hypothermia. Nesrin's husband knelt above her, weeping, as she fell in and out of consciousness. I approached from a departing ambulance, inside two teenage hypothermic boy and girl, in need of emergency care. As I texted details about the children's condition to UNHCR colleagues at the hospital, I informed Hadeel, the doctor from IsraAid that the second ambulance was diverted to another emergency and would not come for Nesrin. Hadeel continued her efforts to resuscitate Nesrin. Thanks to Hadeel and the hospital staff's efforts, Nesrin and the children will be OK. On other days, it would have been more difficult.

I met Nesrin, an Afghan woman in her mid-fifties, after two small boats, carrying 120 Afghan families, crashed against a rocky shoreline on a freezing and windy December morning. They were part of the 500,000 refugees and migrants, who arrived by sea in 2015 from Turkey to the Greek island of Lesvos. Nesrin, the boy, the girl, and others were rescued in the Aegean Sea by the G-Fire Bomberos, a group of volunteer lifeguards from Spain.

G-Fire, the doctors, UNHCR, we are all part of the 'South Lesvos Shoreline Response'

– a diverse group of Greek and international volunteers and humanitarian workers, coordinated through a What's App group established by the UN Refugee Agency. Lifeguards, sea rescue teams, doctors, interpreters, and volunteers from around the world distributing clothes, tea, fruit, or just comforting the new arrivals. Dozens of organizations and independents are working together to provide assistance and support to the Greek government.

In the winter of 2015/2016, it did not matter whether you were Programme, Field, Protection, Communications, or the Head of Office at UNHCR, we all volunteered for shore shifts, with all of our cars filled with emergency stocks of blankets and High Energy Biscuits. Our role was to make sure everyone disembarked safely and that families were not separated. We would then identify those at heightened risk. On every boat, there was a pregnant woman, or a lactating mother, an unaccompanied child, a single parent family, or a medical case. Everyone arrived soaked and trembling after up to five hours on the sea, razor-sharp winds and cold that clings to bones. Often children, sometimes just a few weeks old, would be so frozen, that they would not be able to move. Others would arrive in shock or hysterical, but most refugees and migrants would be full of joy and hope, after surviving the most recent perilous



hurdle in their journey to safety.

Once people were safe, UNHCR organized a bus for their transfer to Moria “Hotspot”, where refugees and migrants would be assisted and registered.

On some shifts, there were thousands of arrivals, and up to ten boats on the horizon. On others, the weather conditions were so

poor, that all you could do was wait and hope that no one attempted the crossing. Still, many did. On the coldest of days, with sub-zero temperatures, snow, gale-force winds, and turbulent seas, a boat, or sometimes several dozens, would arrive.

The emergency changed since the end of winter. Following border closures elsewhere in Europe, refugees and migrants can no longer travel North and West. Greece is now compelled to host the new arrivals and already over 50,000 refugees and migrants are hosted across the country.

Since 20 March, after the start of the agreement to readmit refugees and migrants from Greece back to Turkey, and due to increased border patrols, arrivals have dropped to one, two, or no boats per day. The Moria “Hotspot” also became a closed facility, where all new arrivals are detained while they wait for a decision on whether they can stay in Greece or will be returned to Turkey. UNHCR stopped transporting refugees and migrants from the shore and port to the Hotspot, in line with the agency’s policy opposing mandatory detention.

We still continue our life-saving work on the shorelines alongside volunteers and NGOs, but with fewer arrivals and improved weather conditions, many of the winter challenges have faded. However, amid record levels of global displacement with over 60 million now forced to flee their homes due to war and human rights violations, this emergency is far from being over.

As I write this letter from the island of Lesbos in Greece, in April 2016, over 700 refugees, including many children, have drowned or gone missing in the Mediterranean, most off the coast of Greece. Lesbos has been lucky, with no shipwreck occurring since 16 December 2015. But, the island remains at the front-line of Europe’s refugee emergency with some 90,000 arrivals so far this year. Over half of all refugees and migrants, who arrived in the EU since January 2015 landed on this island. The vast majority are Syrian, Afghan, or Iraqi nationals. Two out of three arrivals are women or children. Thousands of dramatic stories of resilience and courage, of which Nesrin and Hadeel are just two. ■

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© Walk The Talk campaign

WHO Walks the Talk

Introducing new ways to improve the lifestyle of WHO staff and promote healthy workplaces.

VERONICA RIEMER, WHO

WHO has a mandate to promote physical, mental and social health worldwide, but many of those who are doing this valuable work are failing to take the measures about their own wellbeing within their working environment. Extensive travel schedules, followed by long days in front of a computer writing reports and guidelines, leave staff feeling stretched and frazzled, with little motivation for physical activity and health.

Given that the majority of the world's population spends one third of their adult life at work, it is clear that the workplace is an ideal environment for health promotion and health protection. From a close collaboration between Staff Health and Wellbeing Services and the technical cluster dealing with the Prevention of Noncommunicable Diseases (such as cancer, diabetes, and cardiovascular diseases) and Mental Health,

the Walk the Talk (WTT) initiative was born, with the aim of bringing about extensive benefits, but not limited solely to health.

The starting point for the programme was to promote physical activity through the *Step Up* campaign which encourages staff to use the stairs instead of elevators. Over 500 staff members signed up during the launch in January 2016, spearheaded by Director-General Margaret Chan. Slogans, motivating messages and pictures were strategically placed in the stairways and staff given pedometers to monitor their levels of physical activity. Three months after the launch, the percentage of stair users (both men and women) had gone up from 41.3% to 47.4% and the percentage of people taking the elevator for just one

or two floors down from 11.9% to 8.6%. During the first assessment, the majority of stair users took only one or two floors only, when now, the majority take two floors or more.

Just a few days into his new job at WHO, Adam Ungstad was one of the first to enthusiastically embrace the WTT initiative, taking the stairs several times each day to his office on the 7th floor. This father of two from Canada works as a web editor and writer in the Department of Communications. Adam's effort is particularly inspiring as he has a genetic disorder called retinitis pigmentosa which means he is progressively losing his vision, starting with the peripheral and working towards the central vision. Understandably, this makes physical activity challenging.

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• a positive and caring image	• enhanced self-esteem
• improved staff morale	• reduced stress
• reduced staff turnover	• improved morale
• reduced absenteeism	• increased job satisfaction

“I enjoy stair walking as a small way to integrate exercise into my daily routine” he explained. “Ten years ago, when my vision was better, I used to love riding my bike to work, as I would arrive with a clear mind, endorphins going through my system, feeling ready to tackle the day having already accomplished something – walking up the stairs enables me to recapture a bit of that feeling”.

In addition to improving his fitness levels, Adam also found this to be a fun way to connect to other people in his new environment as they make their way to their desk. “After walking up seven flights of stairs, we very often arrive a little out of breath, maybe having broken a bit of a sweat! I’m grateful and happy that the people around me are part of the initiative and encouraging the rest of our team to join up”.

Douglas Bettcher, Director of

Prevention of Noncommunicable Diseases department explained that WHO’s guidelines and recommendations are always based on the best available scientific evidence. “But what image do we give to the world when we can’t live up to our word and practice what we preach? The Walk the Talk initiative challenges the Organization to embody its own advice, recommendations and policies through the environment it creates, and encourages all WHO staff to incorporate healthy habits into their own lives”.

One further activity, which is gaining popularity, is the monthly walk/run organized during the lunch period. Different routes are planned over a 5 km distance and staff are encouraged to walk (or run) with someone they don’t know to promote interaction between departments and teams. “The Walk the Talk initiative looks

for ways to make healthy living easier and more accessible to staff” said Dr. Caroline Cross, Director of the Staff Health and Wellbeing Services. “We are looking at making an impact not just at work, but beyond into personal lives as well”.

And for those who wanted to make that extra effort, with a particular fitness goal in mind, the *Walk The Talk* initiative offered the first 1,001 WHO staff members from all offices worldwide an opportunity to join the Global Corporate Challenge which started on 25 May 2016. In teams of seven, participants are guided and motivated to do physical activities, follow a good nutrition plan, improve psychological well-being and sleep better, as they travel on a 100-day virtual journey around the world. The programme has been designed in a way that encourages everybody to enjoy new experiences together as a team, but with a competitive edge. Each participant uses their pedometer to track their activity, whether it is walking, swimming or cycling. The more activity undertaken, the further their team progresses and the more virtual locations are unlocked.

As a result of the pilot scheme undertaken last year with 217 staff members (31 teams), 73% of participants completed 10,000 steps a day compared

to 9% at the start, and a total reported weight loss of 169 kg collectively.

This year, with three times the number of staff participating (and so popular that the inscriptions were filled within a few hours) the enthusiasm is tangible, as colleagues encourage and challenge one another to collectively achieve targets for short and long-term benefits.

Temo Waqanivalu, from the Prevention of Noncommunicable Diseases Department, is responsible for promoting and organizing the Walk the Talk initiative. “The Global Corporate Challenge is a timely opportunity within the WTT initiative as staff are taking interest in their health and are motivated to improve their overall wellbeing. We are very much looking forward to improving on the results we achieved last year. ■

For more information about Walk the Talk in your business or organization, contact Temo Waqanivalu: Waqanivalut@who.int

The Global Corporate Challenge (GCC) is designed and made available by Gettheworldmoving. For further information, see the GCC website: <https://www.gettheworldmoving.com>

Key figures

Swiss citizenship and international civil servants





8.3 million

total population of Switzerland in 2015

2.05 million

total number of foreigners in Switzerland in 2015
(24.6%)

32,800

naturalised Swiss citizens in 2014

490,578

total population of the Canton de Genève

201,993

foreign permanent residents in the Canton de Genève in 2015 (41.2%), of whom 12% are international civil servants and their dependents.

5,971

naturalisations in the Canton de Genève in 2015

9 %

of naturalisations in the Canton de Genève in 2015 are international civil servants and their dependents

Outstanding bravery

UN peacekeeping missions



© Major Bernd Stieh

On board one of the boats carrying the rations Major Geoff Faraday (left) listens to fellow New Zealand army officer Major Jono Meldrum after he had flown in to help negotiate the safe passage of the boats back through the ambush site.

*Can you learn bravery at university?
Does it come from your convictions or experience?
Is it simply your desire to help?*

EVELINA RIOUKHINA, UNECE

Definitely, young people studying Humanitarian Emergencies or Crisis Response degrees cannot learn bravery, but they can learn how to better provide help in case of emergencies. Many of them have already demonstrated their commitment to humanitarianism by working in the field, and that is why they have chosen this difficult and potentially risky profession. The proof: one current student who, while serving at the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS), received a gallantry

award for two acts of outstanding bravery. Here is his story.

Geoff Faraday has a long-term goal – to help, wherever needed, as part of the largest global organization dedicated to making a better world for everyone, the United Nations. Today, he is a student at one of the most prestigious universities in the United Kingdom, the London School of Economics (LSE). However, he is not studying economics there; he has come to get his Masters in an



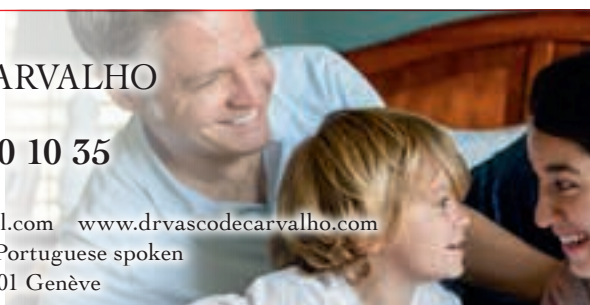
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Major Geoff Faraday (right) with Major Bernd Stieh, a Military Liaison Officer (MLO) from the UN base at Malakal, who had flown in to replace the Russian MLO. They were relaxing as they prepared to stop overnight after moving back through the ambush site.

exceptional field offered by the university: International Development and Humanitarian Emergencies (IDHE). Students attend this course from all around the world, many with the dream of working for the UN or other organizations and agencies that provide humanitarian assistance for those who need it most. Geoff started his studies in September 2015 for a yearlong course after leaving the New Zealand army as a major, having just completed a six-month tour of duty at a UN base in South Sudan. He is not just any student; he is a former army officer who has recently

been awarded the New Zealand Gallantry Star (NZGS) for two acts of extraordinary bravery while serving as a Military Liaison Officer with UNMISS.

This is how he recalled the events that unfolded on 17 April 2014 and how he intervened to protect the Internally Displaced People (IDPs) sheltering at the UN base who came under attack from a mob armed with rifles and machetes to protest at the UN presence: "There were approximately 5000 IDPs in the camp when this mob breached the camp perimeter and began to attack

them. They were shooting randomly into the crowd of fleeing women and children. Though unarmed I tried to get help to the IDPs during the attack by providing information back to my headquarters. At one point I did find myself in a rather uncompromising position but by luck the attackers decided against shooting a UN soldier."

According to a formal military report, "Major Faraday arrived at the camp as the attack began and began coordinating the soldiers defending the camp, and at one stage he attempted to personally intervene while

under threat by an armed attacker. Without regard for his safety, he reported on the situation to the United Nations Mission in South Sudan Headquarters and was able to guide the quick reaction force to counter the penetration of the camp perimeter. The attack left 53 civilians dead and afterwards Major Faraday was one of the few people who went out into the camp to search for those in need of medical attention."

A week later, he came under attack again while deployed as part of a protection force of Nepalese UN peacekeepers for



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© Major Dmitry Fedotkin

Major Faraday on top of the one of the ration barges flying the UN flag having just left Juba with Nepalese peacekeepers on board.

a convoy of three boats with their civilian crews, tasked with taking essential food and fuel supplies along the White Nile River to another UN camp. They came under heavy fire from an element of the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA), and the barge that Geoff was on sustained damage to one of its engines. It became detached from the rest of the convoy, drifting towards the enemy on the river bank. It drifted to a stop 200 meters from the SPLA position, where it was bombarded by intense fire from small arms, rocket-propelled grenades and mortars. The SPLA then tried to close in on the barge, but was repelled by the UN soldiers on board, four of whom were wounded during the fight.

The military report states: "Major Faraday took control of the situation, though he had no command authority over the UN soldiers or the civilian barge crews. For four hours from the start of the attack until mid-afternoon, the convoy was under constant fire. Throughout this period, Major Faraday provided leadership to all on board the barges, moving

under fire between firing positions, encouraging the soldiers to fight back, and ensuring that the four injured were safe and being tended to. He exposed himself to enemy fire on a number of occasions to maintain his situational awareness and provided regular reports to the UN Force Headquarters on the state of the fighting and to request fire support and assistance", the formal report said.

"Realizing that assistance would not be available, he made the decision to abandon the fuel barge, transfer the personnel, injured and stores to the two smaller boats and withdraw the convoy out of danger, which he managed to achieve by nightfall, finding a safe harbor site with an anti-SPLA unit. After the fire-fight and withdrawal, Major Faraday reported to the UN Headquarters that the fuel barge was adrift on the Nile, resulting in the barge being recovered to Malakal... Major Faraday's outstanding gallantry and leadership resulted in a successful conclusion to the battle with the rebel forces, prevented loss of life among the convoy's 72 civilian and military personnel, and

also enabled the UN's northern base in South Sudan to remain operational."

Today as a student, he says: "My experiences in South Sudan very much influenced my decision to pursue my LSE Masters course and my long-term desire to work for the United Nations. I sincerely believe in the mission of the United Nations and am very grateful for the opportunity to have served with the UN mission in South Sudan as a member of the NZDF... The situation in South Sudan is still not good and we have seen ceasefires come and go without any resolution to the fighting. It is a complicated situation, one that those on the outside find very difficult to understand, and I hope that this latest peace agreement can hold, for the sake of the innocent victims of the conflict."

At 39 years old, he has gone back to school to study the theory of emergencies and the provision of humanitarian assistance in order to be better able to provide help where it is most needed. He does not need to be trained in bravery: the NZGS recognizes not just

his bravery but also his ability to put his leadership into practice during an emergency. His desire is to be back out in the field, working for the UN as a civilian, upholding the values of an organization that brings hope to so many people, in South Sudan and in all other regions of the world that are affected by complex emergencies. With his experience and newfound education, why should he not join our ranks, realizing his dream to serve for the high ideals of the United Nations? ■

Journey of a Library Book

The UNOG Library is a unique institution in the Palais des Nations. It is a regular working research library amidst the constant meetings and turmoil of the Secretariat, serviced by professional library staff.

MS YUKA ASAI, UN LIBRARY

The UNOG library exists to assist staff and mission personnel in their research, but it is also part of the vibrant academic community in Geneva. The library has close relationships with other international organizations and university libraries. Unlike Dag Hammarskjöld Library in New York, it is open to the public and receives many scholars and students inside its walls, continually adapting to the latest research tools and methods.

To keep up with the changing intellectual environment, the library collection is constantly expanded and updated. The focus of the collection has always been the needs of our users. Their input comes in all forms, but the most popular one is a simple book request. So what happens when a user requests a new book to the UNOG Library? There are two options. If the book is available through other Swiss libraries, the fastest way is to request an interlibrary loan. This is often not only the quickest but also least costly way to provide much needed information. If the book is not available elsewhere, then the book request is presented to the UNOG Library Acquisitions Committee for approval.

There are only few rules in book selection. If the subject is suitable to the workings of the UN and the price is appropriate, the book request is accepted. Unfortunately, some popular books do not fall into this category. You will not find bestselling novels or how-to books among our selection. Instead, users will find an extensive collection in international law, economics, political science, human rights and many other topics that are relevant to the workings of the UN. Once the request is approved, the book is ordered, received, and processed – and delivered to the requestor.

Each process involves library staff. Once the request is approved, the process is set in motion.

First, one person sends orders and receives the books. The books are then sorted and each receives a bar code. The Bar code gives it an official ID like the staff index number. This ID remains with the book throughout its life within the UNOG Library.

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The books getting ready!

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Once the call number is given, the book is ready for the last check-up for any corrections, before it is finally ready for the user.

This process is repeated for all requests or any new suggestions received. Now you know the journey a book makes through the library, from its arrival to finding its proper place.

But the library is not just about books. In the next months, you will learn more about the different services available at the UNOG Library to staff and researchers alike. Information comes in many forms and the UNOG library is there to provide assistance for all. ■

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Syria

Protecting Cultural Heritage : Protection of human lives

The destruction of cultural heritage is part and parcel of the humanitarian and security emergency in Syria today, and its protection should be at the core of all efforts to find a way out of the crisis.

UNESCO DIVISION FOR HERITAGE

All destruction of Syrian heritage sites must be condemned as a direct blow against the history of the Syrian people. In the midst of this human and cultural turmoil, the Syrian people have shown determination to protect this heritage. At the outset, UNESCO wishes to pay tribute to the courage of all those who work to document and safeguard the heritage of Syria, the Directorate of Syrian Antiquities and Museum, as well as many organizations of the civil society, inside and outside Syria, notably the *Associating for the Protection of Syrian Antiquities* (APSA), the Shirin network, ASOR and so many others, often risking their lives to preserve what they cherish the most. Their courage and determination reminds everyone that protecting culture is not about stones and monuments – it is about transmitting core human values and principles without which no human society could survive.

We owe the people of Syria an absolute commitment to document and safeguard this unique heritage, building on the best of international expertise, from all sides.

World Heritage sites and other cultural landmarks in Syria belong to the whole of humanity and to all Syrians. All Syrians, together, must be able to reclaim this heritage as a symbol of identity and dignity. The legendary Palmyra has gained tremendous attention in the media, but it cannot be disassociated from other sites, like Aleppo or the Crac des Chevaliers, Bosra or the Ancient cities in Northern Syria, which have also suffered heavy damage, from bombing and shelling, and have sometimes been used as military camps, in violation of international law. In addition, the protection of heritage is inseparable from the protection of human lives, taking into account the wounds and sufferings of the population during the conflict underway.

This is the global approach that has been endorsed at the 199th session of the UNESCO Executive Board in April 2016, when Member States unanimously adopted a decision regarding UNESCO's role in safeguarding and preservation Palmyra and other Syrian world heritage sites. This decision calls for broad participation and coordination among States, the United Nations



and its agencies, as well as other partner organizations, in restoring damaged Syrian Cultural Heritage with the relevant provisions of international law and when the security situation allows. This sends a strong message, from all Member States, about the full readiness of all governments to participate in international efforts, under the leadership and coordination of UNESCO, rejecting any hasty or unilateral work.

To succeed, the first priority is to assess the damage and, when possible, to take emergency safeguarding measures so as to avoid further irreversible losses. This is why UNESCO has called for extreme prudence and a great sense of responsibility to all partners, and all states, in the current debates about restoration activities, new technologies and 3D “reconstruction” initiatives. Any such activity would require prior in-depth scientific assessments and discussions with all concerned, taking into account conceptual and methodological considerations, and appears to be very premature at this stage.

For the time being, UNESCO receives and monitors reports and daily damage assessments on all cultural heritage sites. UNESCO leads concerted action with stakeholders, including international and academic institutions, the Syrian civil society, both in the country and in the Diaspora. UNESCO has developed comprehensive action plans to coordinate international assistance for the safeguarding of cultural heritage, including in the framework of its project for the protection of

Syrian Heritage launched in 2014 with the support of the European Union, Austria and Flanders.

The Internet platform *Observatory of Syrian Cultural heritage* was established in March 2014 to collect information on damage, destruction and looting, as well as disruptions to intangible heritage practices and transmission. Training on emergency protection of cultural heritage has been provided to more than 125 professionals and more than 12 safeguarding initiatives have been triggered on the ground, reflecting principles and objectives of UNESCO Conventions and with broad participation of communities. UNESCO has also organized several technical meetings with the expert community to discuss preservation and restoration approaches.

As soon as the security conditions allowed, UNESCO sent a rapid assessment mission to Palmyra on 25 April 2016. The mission inspected both Palmyra’s museum and archaeological site, escorted by United Nations security personnel. They took stock of considerable damage to the Museum where they found that most of those statues and sarcophagi that were too large to be removed for safekeeping were defaced, smashed, their fragments left lying on the ground. At the archaeological site, UNESCO’s experts took stock of the state of conservation of the grand colonnade and agora. They observed the destruction of the triumphal arch and Temple of Baal Shamin, which was smashed to smithereens. We

are still far from a complete assessment of the damage.

Cultural Heritage is a pillar of Syrian identity, and a source of dignity, resilience and cohesion for all Syrians. It has a central role to play in the international community’s response to the crisis in Syria, as part of broader humanitarian and peace building operations. To succeed, it is important that heritage is not taken hostage by politics, and it is the responsibility of all actors to preserve culture as one of the integral areas of dialogue and consensus, in an extremely complex situation. We can make cultural heritage a symbol of unity for the international community. ■



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Promoting civil society participation in the SDGs

What can we learn from the Universal Periodic Review?

As the 2030 Agenda begins its formidable journey of realisation, the time is ripe to reflect on other inter-governmental mechanisms that may offer important lessons and best practices.



AOIFE HEGARTY, UPR INFO

In September 2015, the UN General Assembly adopted by consensus the highly anticipated *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*. The ambitious results pledged that “no one will be left behind”. *UPR Info* has been working on the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) since its inception in 2008. We see strong potential for the UPR and Agenda 2030 to accelerate and reinforce human rights and development frameworks, in particular through key cooperation of civil society.

The 2030 Agenda, including its 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), builds on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), but strives to go much further. By 2030, the aim is to have eradicated extreme poverty, ended hunger, and achieved gender equality. And this relates to just three of the Goals. The Agenda also

seeks to uphold a range of other human rights, as well as significantly improve environmental protection, sustainable energy use, and economic growth. The SDGs represent a historic opportunity to reduce economic, social and political inequality, and to raise living standards on the global level. So how can we ensure that States will implement their SDG commitments? Critically, has civil society been adequately recognised in the Agenda’s framework as a key partner to help monitor, implement and report from the ground?

States decided that the reviews of the SDGs will be voluntary and “country-led”, *i.e.* countries wishing to undergo the review will present a status-update on where they are on realising their commitments. The follow-up and review process of the SDGs is to take place at the national, regional and global

level, with the High-level Political Forum (HLPF) serving as the central platform. The 2016 HLPF, scheduled for 11-20 July, will feature the review of 22 volunteering countries.

In principle, the reviews will include “other stakeholders, including civil society” and “shall provide a platform for partnerships, including through the participation of *major groups and other relevant stakeholders* [MGoS]”. This builds upon General Assembly resolution (A/RES/67/290), according to which representatives of MGoS – some though not all of whom are civil society – will be allowed to access the HLPF. Participation includes intervening in official meetings, making recommendations and having access to documents. Nevertheless, the official SDG platform caveats that: “Member States ultimately decide upon the modalities of participation of MGoS.”

With less than two months to go before the HLPF, it is not yet clear – at least to those not directly involved – how these modalities, defined in 2013, will be applied in the context of the follow-up and review of the SDGs. Consequently, it is still vague as to what civil society participation in the HLPF will concretely entail. The draft resolution on the follow-up and

review of the Agenda at the global level, currently being negotiated in New York in advance of the 2016 HLPF, reiterates resolution 67/290, but does not clarify the modalities in practice. The picture remains particularly unclear for small non-governmental organisations (NGOs) not immediately working in the on-going New York-based process of definition of these modalities, as well as those not already familiar with the functioning of the MGoS.

By contrast, defined modalities for civil society input are a large part of the success of the UPR. This is a mechanism of the UN Human Rights Council aimed at improving human rights on the ground. Each UN Member State – regardless of geopolitical or economic influence – must undergo an international human rights assessment every five years. So far, the mechanism has secured 100% participation from all corners of the world, from Afghanistan to Zimbabwe. Similar to the envisaged SDGs’ framework, the UPR is a voluntary, peer-review mechanism, where States make recommendations to one another on how they can improve their human rights record. Some concrete examples of UPR achievements include the abolition of the death penalty in Fiji’s military

code, the establishment of a Child Labour Unit in Sierra Leone to combat child servitude, and Greece’s enlargement of a nationwide Asylum Service.

The official role given to civil society in the UPR is limited but important: they can submit reports to the UN on the human rights situation in the State that will be reviewed. Importantly, reporting is open to all organisations, and not limited to NGOs with ECOSOC accreditation. This has proved to be an inclusive entry point for smaller and grass-roots organisations wishing to provide direct input in their State’s human rights reviews at the international level. The UN synthesises the information received into a collated report, which is a key document used by States to formulate recommendations. NGOs can also take the floor at the adoption of the UPR report, during the Human Rights Council in Geneva. These measures grant an official space for civil society participation in the formal elements of the UPR mechanism. Furthermore, one of the greatest successes of the UPR is its potential for building partnerships between civil society and governments. NGOs often have specific expertise that can be beneficial for States to support the implementation of UPR recommendations at the local

level. In many national contexts, the UPR has prompted a shift in the traditional adversarial paradigm between civil society and governments to a more partnership-based relationship.

The negotiation phase of the SDGs has undoubtedly been more inclusive than that for the MDGs, and Agenda 2030 is proving successful in building multi-stakeholders partnerships. Nevertheless, an official, easily accessible and well defined space for civil society input in the SDGs’ follow-up and review process should be provided for at all levels of the review. If States are serious about not leaving anyone behind, they must ensure clear and inclusive modalities for civil society engagement, including grassroots organisations. Leading by example, the UPR has proven the transformative potential of multi-stakeholder participation in voluntary, State-led review mechanisms. Agenda 2030 would benefit from drawing on this successful track record. ■

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Have you seen the intern?

Imagine for a second that after graduate school, you work full time for several months in one of the most expensive cities in the world, and in return, receive no pay.

CAROLINA URREGO-SANDOVAL, KING'S COLLEGE LONDON. FORMER INTERN AT UNCTAD

Does this sound familiar? Would you do this even though the chances of getting a real paid job, as a result, are slim?

In hundreds of international organizations, governments, NGOs, banks and companies based in Geneva, these are some of the growing concerns among the more than 3000 young graduate students who come every year to complete internships in this city. This phenomenon is neither new, endemic to Geneva nor easy to address. So far and leading by example, the International Labor Organization (ILO) is one of the very few organizations in Geneva that now provides a stipend to cover their interns' basic expenses. Yet within UN organizations, internships are unpaid and sometimes not considered as work experience. According to the Administrative Instruction for Internships, their claimed purpose is to provide a framework by which graduate and postgraduate

students' educational experience can be enhanced through practical work assignments and to expose them to the work of the UN.

Unfortunately, for many bright and highly-qualified young people around the world, especially from least developed and developing countries, living in a city like Geneva is a luxury they cannot afford. Therefore, taking an internship here becomes an exclusionary and elitist process since the selection criteria are not only based on merit and talent but economic means. Thus, it is troubling that the United Nations, an organization that stands for equality, justice, and promotes the UN International Year of Youth has not yet seriously considered or noticed the needs of its youngest members and continues to use unpaid labor under the excuse of providing a valuable experience.

However, interns have met together, recognized this situation and taken action. This is how in October 2011, the Geneva Interns Association

(GIA) was born. Now, GIA is the biggest of its kind in the world and is actively spreading ideas and closely collaborating with similar groups such as the Hage Interns Association (HIA) and organizations in other countries. As an intern myself, in 2012 I was part of different events organized by the Association. It surprised me to see how many people they can bring together thanks to their newsletters, website, Facebook page and Twitter account, and how well-known and organized they are.

During a conversation with the Co-Chairs of the Association, we discussed GIA's main goals, activities and plans for the future. The Association seeks:

1. To improve the professional welfare of interns. A few years ago, GIA launched the campaign *Unpaid is Unfair*, described as a commitment to social justice since people deserve to be compensated in a way that is fair and that gives them the ability to lead a dignified life. The campaign aimed to raise awareness of

UN interns' conditions globally and brought the petition: *Make Youth a Priority – Pay UN Interns a Fair Wage* signed by over 7000 people, to Secretary-General of the UN, Ban Ki-moon, and other administrative bodies.

2. Improve interns' life beyond work. GIA members work to strengthen the existing community of interns in Geneva and to provide a point of contact for interns experiencing difficulties. They also organize popular social events such as drinks, lunches, movie nights, lectures and language exchanges. Acknowledging the struggle many interns face while living in Geneva, they successfully work to establish partnerships with restaurants and cinemas to get special discounts for interns.

3. Achieve continuity and build a lasting institution. Doing all this work is not easy, and help is always needed because: *"the more we are, the more powerful we will be"*. From what I have seen, one of the Association's main characteristics and value is

that is organized and coordinated by highly motivated and energetic people with ideas that are worth listening to and supporting.

However, despite the efforts of GIA and fellow interns, many continue to face tough situations during their internships. Discounts at the UN cafeteria and on public transport are valuable but are not enough. A case in point is the story of David Hyde, a 22-year-old International Relations student from New Zealand who due to economic constraints was forced to live in a tent. His case became world famous in 2015 and brought to the fore the plights of unpaid interns in international organizations.¹

After this short introduction to the interns' world, let me ask you again: have you actually seen the intern?

As Henry Thoreau used to say: *"Sometimes the question is not what you look at, but what you see."* If you are reading this and if you think that working for free is unfair, that everyone should have equal opportunities, that

interns' conditions should be addressed from a different perspective, and cases like David Hyde's should never take place again, I invite you, no matter who you are or where you work, to think for a moment: How can I help? What can I do to make UN internships a more inclusive experience and improve interns' conditions? Moreover, how would I feel if I were in the same situation? ■

You can find more information about interns, GIA, and their activities on the links below. Please remember: everyone is welcome to join and collaborate!

1. BBC News: How a UN intern was forced to live in tent in Geneva
<http://goo.gl/6gK0Jw>

GIA: <http://internsassociation.org/>

An issue of internships: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mAAohInf6kw>

The Intern – Short film shot in Geneva: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1Zq6CJvMBIO>

Education/Enseignement



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In defence of Umoja

The UN's new management system, Umoja, has received a lot of attention recently, and not all good. From leaks to the press revealing quarrels among top managers, and rants by former ASGs, to unpaid salaries and even April Fools jokes. However, teething problems are not unusual for a project of this size, and it is already paying dividends.

CHRISTIAN SAUNDERS, OFFICE OF THE UNDER-SECRETARY-GENERAL OF MANAGEMENT, UNITED NATIONS, NEW YORK

Umoja ('Unity' in Swahili), the UN's new Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) solution, is now a live operational system for over 30,000 staff members based in 400 locations around the world and it is working well as a whole. Despite some doom and gloom predictions that it would be a costly *Kafkaesque* debacle or would simply fail

to go live, this was not the case and the great majority of staff, myself included, have not encountered any issues in using it. Everyday thousands of transactions are now being processed successfully through Umoja.

The deployment and transition to this new way of working has not been seamless and I cannot and will not claim that the current usage of the system does not come without its share of challenges. Equally, it would have been incredibly naive to have thought that an initiative of this scale and complexity would not come without its painful moments. Nevertheless, I am pleased (and yes, relieved) to report that the solution is for the most part working well and that its benefits are beginning to emerge. These will no doubt increase exponentially as the system overcomes its current "teething" challenges.

I became closely involved with Umoja in August 2015 when I was asked to help out with the running of the Umoja headquarters deployment group or "HDG" as it is more commonly known in New York (where the urge to create another acronym is seldom restrained). The disparate way of providing support services at UN headquarters in New York made the deployment of Umoja in New York particularly complex and challenging. To try to overcome this, staff members from the various offices were brought together to form the HDG and this team, which was housed in a "bull pen" type arrangement in the now defunct North Lawn Building, got down to the business of preparing New York for Umoja. Staff in the HDG, along with their counterparts in other offices and the Umoja team worked insane hours seven days a week in the final months before deployment to get New

York ready for the coming out of the new solution. Looking back, it was an astonishing group effort that demonstrated the true spirit of the UN, with people of all nationalities, genders, creeds, ages, etc. working side by side towards a common objective. There is no doubt in my mind that the key to the success of the deployment of this huge and complex enterprise across the world was the resolute commitment of the many staff involved, and it served to reaffirm to me personally why I became a United Nations staff member.

Now that we have gone live, the current focus is on stabilizing operations and on achieving this as quickly as possible. However this will take time and, in this world of instant gratification, I don't think many people are really aware of how much effort and how much time it will take to iron out all the issues and to stabilize the solution. Similar large scale complex deployments have taken as long as 18-24 months and sometimes longer for the solution to stabilize.

The biggest challenges encountered to-date have been: system and resourcing problems related to travel operations and accounting (mainly due to customization of the SAP functionality to capture the UN's more complicated requirements for travel operations and accounting – many of which are driven by requirements mandated by the General; convincing people to embrace the new way of working; persuading people to take the training on offer and to invest the time to become proficient in the use of what is a complex, if not particularly intuitive, solution (SAP have acknowledged this fact and is issuing a new and much more intuitive version next year). The administration is solving the issues as they arise as

quickly as possible and at the same time ensuring that all our policies and procedures are simplified, streamlined and properly adapted to the new working environment. Many of the policies and procedures were put in place decades ago to reduce the risk associated with a decentralized service delivery model where visibility and oversight were difficult given the challenges associated with geography, scant local regulatory authority, disparate legacy IT systems and less than ideal communications and transport infrastructure. We, the Secretariat must now seize the huge opportunity that Umoja presents to ensure that our new business model is sound, responsive and coherent to the needs of our clients, particularly those in the field who often work under very difficult and unpredictable conditions.

Umoja is a radically different way of working, and as with any change initiative of this magnitude there has been and will continue to be resistance to change and an unwillingness to adopt the operating and fiscal discipline that Umoja imposes on us. People complain that there was more flexibility with the old legacy systems used



© United Nations

prior to Umoja. This is probably true, but this is because these were standalone systems with fewer controls and offered a lot less in terms of visibility over the organizations operations. With Umoja, past practices are no longer viable as it forces fiscal discipline. Transactions wherever they take place in the world are visible in real time to anyone with the appropriate access rights across the globe.

In closing, I would urge people to take the time to learn how to use it, as the more familiar and comfortable you become with working in the system, the easier it becomes and the more you realize that it's really a very powerful and useful solution. Be patient and allow the

administration the opportunity to iron out the issues, stabilize the solution and show what it can do. Umoja is here to stay, it will make the UN stronger and will help us succeed in building a UN fit for the 21st Century... don't fear the system, you are not alone and if you need help you should not hesitate to reach out to your local support centre!

Change is always difficult but change is what has to happen in order to reach the full benefits that Umoja was created to achieve! A Luta Continua! ■

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Le tour du monde...

*En 15 ans,
Jan Hoffmann s'est fait
faire volontairement 46
coupes de cheveux dans
44 pays. Pourquoi? Parce
qu'il est curieux, et que
quand il part en mission
il aime profiter de son
temps libre entre
deux réunions.*

SOLANGE BEHOTEGUY, UNCTAD

Il part en mission équipé de deux montres qui lui donnent la sensation de disposer de 48 heures par jour, et d'un appareil photo. Jan¹ est passionné par son travail et par la photographie.

Le résultat de ses années d'expériences et de ses échanges humains est une étude empirique intitulée *Haircuts around the World: An empirical study into GATT and GATS*, publiée en avril dernier dans son photoblog².

Dès le début, on est embarqué par l'humour et le ton ironique, et par le second degré développé dans sa vaste étude de cinq pages! On retrouve là tous les éléments d'une véritable recherche internationale. Pour commencer, un titre long comme un jour sans pain chargé d'acronymes qu'un néophyte devra se contenter de deviner s'il ne veut pas foncer sur Wikipédia. L'œuvre comporte un volet dans lequel sont cités des personnalités comme François de la Rochefoucauld, Socrate et Mark Twain, qui n'ont a priori aucun lien entre eux mais qui résonnent haut et fort. C'est seulement vers la fin, dans les conclusions, que l'on comprend que ces trois citations résument en quelque sorte la pensée de l'auteur.

Un salon de coiffure est un monde à part, un concentré de sauce tomate et de psychanalyse. Pour réaliser son étude, Jan les a choisis de manière aléatoire, et bien que polyglotte il a dû à de nombreuses reprises se servir du langage des signes – *body langage* – pour se faire comprendre. Cela a pu lui coûter de se retrouver presque tondu: il lui est arrivé de serrer le pouce et l'index pour montrer son souhait de se débarrasser de 4 mm de cheveux, ce que le «service provider» a interprété comme la volonté de ne garder que 4 mm de cheveux. Les conséquences de ce quiproquo étant un délai dans la compilation de nouvelles évidences empiriques: le chercheur a dû attendre plusieurs mois avant de fréquenter à nouveau un salon de coiffure.

La recherche a conclu qu'il existerait une corrélation entre le produit intérieur brut par habitant d'un pays et la tendance des coiffeurs à se faire tatouer. 34% des coiffeurs rencontrés dans le cadre de l'étude en question étaient tatoués, mais ce chiffre, explique l'auteur, risque d'être sous-estimé car n'ont été considérées que les évidences visibles.

La même analyse suggère que le pourcentage de coiffeurs hommes serait plus élevé



en 46 coupes de cheveux

que celui des femmes (52% contre 48%), chiffre à prendre avec précaution car, toujours selon Jan, l'information était parfois «incomplète», voir trouble.

On apprend également que la majorité des coiffeurs appartiennent à la nationalité du pays visité, mais que la minorité des coiffeurs étrangers tend à réclamer un prix plus élevé qu'un autochtone pour une coupe de cheveux. Par exemple, un coiffeur chinois à Toronto, ou un barbier originaire de Barbade à Londres, seront plus dispendieux. On n'est jamais mieux coiffé que chez soi! L'outil le plus utilisé serait la paire de ciseaux (69%), suivi de la tondeuse (27%) et des rasoirs (4%).

Comme toute étude honnête, la présente œuvre possède des annexes plus étendues

que l'étude elle-même! Une collection de photos prouve que Jan n'a jamais succombé à la tentation des extensions de cheveux, et que «*les cheveux poussent pour être coupés*» puisque «*la seule chose constante dans la vie c'est le changement*» (Rochevoucauld).

Entre économie, commerce et humour, le blog de Jan nous montre que, pour faire de la recherche, il est indispensable de s'intéresser aux autres, d'ouvrir son esprit et de cultiver l'envie du partage. On connaissait les films *The Barber* des frères Cohen, *Edouard aux mains d'argent* de Tim Burton ou *Le mari de la coiffeuse* de Patrice Leconte, il y a désormais aussi le blog de Jan! Pour ceux qui veulent entrer dans les coulisses, sachez que des études comme celle-ci nécessitent du temps et

une capacité d'observation à long terme. Une mise à jour du blog est d'ores et déjà prévue pour 2030, date pour laquelle on espère changer le monde, et Jan prendre sa retraite! ■

1 Jan Hoffmann is Chef, Trade Facilitation Section, UNCTAD

2 <https://janhoffmann.live/2016/04/30/hair-cuts/>

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Le Festival international du film à Cannes Tapis rouge déroulé

*Description de la magie du cinéma d'auteur
engagé, porteur du cinéma de demain.*

SANDY ROUPIOZ, OCHA

C'est la lumineuse affiche du film *Le Mépris* (1963) qui dévoile la thématique du 69^e Festival International du Film (FIF) à Cannes, à savoir les marches dorées de la Villa Malaparte, auréolées de la magie de Godard et d'un casting exceptionnel avec Michel Piccoli et Brigitte Bardot.

Jamais deux sans trois, il est revenu à Woody Allen la lourde tâche de lancer le festival avec *Cafe Society*, qui reste hors compétition comme il se doit pour tout film de Woody. *Cafe Society* nous a fait entrer dans la société hollywoodienne des années 30, ambiance jazzie assurée pour rythmer les aléas d'un premier amour manqué, celui qui vous suit insidieusement le temps d'une vie. Sur fond de monologue et du sempiternel aller-retour Los Angeles/New York, cher à Woody, film d'ouverture pour le moins réussi puisque paillette,

strass, malentendus et humour s'entremêlent.

Cannes c'est aussi un jury, pour le moins cosmopolite présidé par le réalisateur australien Georges Miller (*Mad Max: Fury Road*), et entouré de huit membres: Arnaud Desplechin (France), Kirsten Dunst (Etats-Unis), Valeria Golino (Italie), Mads Mikkelsen (Danemark), Laszlo Nemes (Hongrie), Vanessa Paradis (France), Katayoon Shahabi (Iran) et Donald Sutherland (Canada).

Les films retenus en compétition pour cette 69^e édition sont incontestablement considérés comme dignes d'un grand cru, en présence des habitués que sont les Frères Dardenne, Almodovar, Loach, Garcia, Mungiu, Mendoza, aux cotés de la nouvelle vague qui comprend Dolan, Ade, Mendonça Filho, ou Dumont.

Le plus grand Festival International du Film: mode d'emploi

Les films en compétition sont en course pour la palme d'or et ont le privilège d'être projetés dans le grand Théâtre des Lumières. Au-delà de la palme, le FIF est un festival chargé d'histoire qui a pour objectif de faire découvrir les joyaux cinématographiques de demain. C'est possible à travers la Quinzaine des Réalisateurs, une section parallèle organisée par la société des réalisateurs indépendants, mais aussi la Semaine de la Critique, autre section parallèle organisée par le syndicat français de la Critique du Cinéma ou la sélection Cinéfondation, présidé et farouchement soutenu par Gilles Jacobs qui a pour but de promouvoir des réalisateurs de courts métrages en herbe.

Dans la sélection de la Semaine de la Critique sont à remarquer

cette année les débuts de Kiberlain (avec *Bonne Figure*) ou de Casta (*en Moi*) dans la réalisation.

Cannes 2016: sélection magique qui redore le blason de la sélection reine

Le FIF a été une nouvelle fois l'occasion de voyager: quoi de plus festif que de débiter le festival sur les plages du Nord, le fief de Bruno Dumont, (*Ma Loute*), puis de passer par la Suisse le temps d'une cure (*Mal de Pierres*, Nicole Garcia) ou de goûter à la chaleur madrilène (*Julieta*, Pedro Almodovar). On peut aussi choisir délibérément de s'enfermer dans un huis clos familial étouffant (*Juste la fin du Monde*, Xavier Dolan), ou de découvrir le quotidien grisâtre d'une jeune femme médecin célibataire à Liège (*La fille inconnue*, les frères Dardennes). Pourquoi pas même plonger dans la Roumanie contemporaine (*Bacalaureat*, Cristian Mungiu), revenue de ses illusions de l'après-Ceaucescu, avant d'achever ce tour d'horizon avec l'Iran sur fond de pièce de théâtre d'Arthur Miller (*Le Client*, Asghar Farhadi). Dans cette sélection, qui reste marquée par son hétérogénéité, deux chemins parallèles se dessinent dans la quête de survie, que ce soit pour une vie meilleure ou tout simplement être heureux dans notre société contemporaine.

Loin de se tourner vers l'extérieur, c'est bien vers l'intérieur, que les projecteurs ont zoomé dans une grande partie des films présentés en sélection. La famille comme fil conducteur, comme si en ces années troubles, seule cette cellule de base pouvait être le lien à la vie, au vrai, au futur – et ce au-delà de la difficulté, des non-dits, des potentielles blessures restées ouvertes. Par famille, il ne faut plus entendre ce noyau familial soudé avec des parents unis à la tête d'une grande fratrie. Non, par famille, il faut plutôt entendre les relations filiales – et non le couple qui lui aussi ne sait plus affronter l'adversité et reste blessé par les trahisons avouées à demi-mot ou vainement cachées... Et le lien familial, indestructible, bien qu'ayant été, et parfois plus d'une fois, détruit, interrompu voire rompu durant de nombreuses années, se décline à l'infini: relation mère-fille (*Julieta*), relation mère-fils (*Juste la fin du Monde*), relation père-fille (*Bacalaureat* ou *Toni Erdmann*) ou père de substitution rencontré dans un job center (*I, Daniel Blake*). A contrario, c'est l'absence même du fils ou de la fille, souvent remplie du halo de la culpabilité, qui va jusqu'à structurer une existence ou des choix – le choix du silence pris par Louis dans *Juste la fin du Monde* où un sens se lit en surface au détour d'un regard ou d'un sourire complice.

A l'inverse, l'appel à la résistance, en prenant une approche résolument alternative, innovante parfois tellurique, qui peut aussi parfois s'allier dangereusement au burlesque, a été représenté dans *Toni Erdmann* et la figure du père encombrant et facétieux interprété par Peter Simonischek; *Aquarius* et le superbe portrait de la femme résistante; *Paterson*, dans lequel Jim Jarmusch qui offre une vision optimiste et poétique, ou *Elle* dans laquelle Isabelle Huppert ne conçoit magistralement la survie que dans la surenchère à la psychopathie.

Un palmarès 2016 à contre-courant

Deuxième palme d'or pour Ken Loach, dix ans après *Le vent se lève*, le réalisateur britannique, dépeint – dans *I, Daniel Blake* – une chronique sociale qui dénonce avec émotion et réalisme les aberrations bureaucratiques du système social en Grande Bretagne ainsi que le système d'humiliation et de contrôle social qui en découlent. Ken Loach, en réalisateur engagé, en profite pour reprendre son thème de prédilection et pour fendre le néo-libéralisme ambiant en Europe.

Xavier Dolan, prend pleinement sa place de dauphin en recevant le Grand Prix (sorte

de deuxième prix) avec *Juste la fin du monde*.

Prix d'interprétation masculine: acteur iranien Shahab Hosseini, dans *le Client*.

Prix d'interprétation féminine: actrice Philippine Jaclyn Rose dans *Ma Rosa* de Brillante Mendoza.

Prix de la mise en scène: Ex-aequo: Olivier Assayas, avec *the Personal Shopper* et Cristian Mungiu, pour *Bacalaureat*.

Prix du scénario: réalisateur iranien Asghar Farhadi pour *le Client*.

On ne saurait terminer sans faire référence aux grands absents, pourtant acclamés par les critiques pour leur innovation et leur esprit de résistance, porteurs de cette solution alternative, avec en tête *Toni Erdmann* de Maren Ade, ou *Elle* de Paul Verhoeven.

Le tapis rouge est sur le point d'être replié jusqu'à l'année prochaine. Cannes, c'est aussi l'occasion d'écrire une nouvelle page dans l'histoire du cinéma, d'un cinéma d'auteur qui comme l'a souligné, Ken Loach au moment de la remise de sa palme, traverse une période difficile. Il s'agit bien de «rester forts» puisqu'un autre monde reste «possible et nécessaire».■

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The city of Quito in Ecuador, where the Habitat III conference will take place in October 2017

Habitat III Conference

Housing and sustainable urban development

In its resolution 66/207 of 14 March 2012, the General Assembly decided to convene, in line with the bi-decennial cycle (1976, 1996 and 2016), a third United Nations conference on housing and sustainable urban development (Habitat III) in 2016 to reinvigorate the global commitment to sustainable urbanization focusing on the implementation of a New Urban Agenda.

ESTRELLA MERLOS, UNITAR

The third conference on housing and sustainable urban development builds on the Habitat Agenda, various relevant declarations on sustainable development, the outcomes of major United Nations conferences and summits, particularly the Rio+20 conference, and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

It is projected that 70 per cent of the world's population will be living in urban areas by 2050. This rapid urban growth is mainly occurring in countries that are least able to cope with it, and many cities of the developing world have found themselves unprepared for the spatial, demographic and environmental challenges associated with urbanization.

The Habitat III Conference will take place in Quito, Ecuador from 17 to 20 October, bringing together some 30,000 representatives from around the world, including delegates from the 193 member states of the United Nations, along with local government officials and representatives from the private sector, international organizations, civil society, academia, and the United Nations System.

The Conference will offer a unique venue for developing a shared perspective on human settlements and sustainable urban development, and for discussing the challenges and opportunities that urbanization offers for the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals. It will



Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon (front centre) poses for a group photo with representatives of local authorities' associations taking part in the 16-17 May informal hearings at UN headquarters in preparation for Habitat III.

also serve as a global platform to discuss and adopt a New Urban Agenda that is meant to achieve inclusive, people-centered and sustainable urban development.

The New Urban Agenda highlights the tremendous positive contribution of urbanization as a driving force of development and proposes a set of transformative commitments for a sustainable urban development, as well as recommendations for its effective implementation. In particular, the Agenda is based on a comprehensive human-rights approach to urbanization that would contribute to the realization of the rights to development and to an adequate standard of living, including the right to food and water, the rule of law, good governance, gender equality, women's empowerment and the overall commitment to just and democratic societies.

The Habitat III preparatory process started in September 2014 and will continue until the third session of the Preparatory Committee for the Habitat III Conference that will be held in Surabaya, Indonesia, in July 2016. The "Zero Draft"

It will also serve as global platform to discuss and adopt a *New Urban Agenda* that is meant to achieve inclusive, people-centered and sustainable urban development.

of the New Urban Agenda has been prepared on the basis of inputs from broad regional and thematic consultations, as well as policy recommendations elaborated by a specialized UN Task Team and comments thereon received by participating states and stakeholders.

The development and implementation of this Urban Agenda requires the active engagement of national governments and local authorities, civil society, the private sector and the United Nations system as a whole. To contribute to this aim, the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) jointly with the Habitat III Secretariat hosted an Urban Breakfast under the title "Humanitarian aid and human rights in the new urban agenda" to reflect on challenges facing sustainable urban development and key priorities to take into account in the New Urban Agenda to be adopted at the Habitat III Conference. The Urban Breakfast took place on

9 May at the Palais des Nations and was attended by representatives from over 30 UN member states and other stakeholders.

During the Urban Breakfast, Mr. Roi Chiti, Regional and Inter-agency Coordinator of the Habitat III Secretariat provided an overview of the preparatory process behind Habitat III and the roadmap towards the conference. Mr. Nikhil Seth, Assistant Secretary-General and Executive Director of UNITAR stressed the crucial need for capacity building to implement the New Urban Agenda and expressed his commitment to supporting the process and outcomes of Habitat III through capacity building efforts. ■

You are invited to join the dialogue and give your feedback on the New Urban Agenda at www.habitat3.org/zerodraft



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Venez rejoindre le club de football des Nations Unies

Envie de Foot?

Le club de football des Nations Unies, fondé en 1983, compte 41 membres qui sont fonctionnaires de diverses organisations internationales telles que l'ONUG, l'OMS, le BIT et l'ITC, ainsi que des employés de missions permanentes auprès des Nations Unies et des membres de leur famille.

AHMED DARWISH, UNOG

Le club est géré par un comité directeur constitué d'un président, d'un vice-président, d'un secrétaire et d'un trésorier.

Depuis des années, le club de football participe activement aux championnats organisés par l'Association genevoise de football corporatif¹, qui est composée de membres de plusieurs entités de grande renommée basées à Genève tel que Rolex, Procter & Gamble, le Barreau de Genève, Caran D'Ache et bien d'autres. Le championnat se déroule généralement entre la mi-mars et la mi-juin et, en règle générale, le club dispute un match par semaine, le soir après le travail. De plus, le club participe tout au long de l'année à des tournois en salle ou à l'extérieur.

Le club, à travers son comité directeur, voudrait encourager le personnel de l'ONUG et d'autres organisations internationales à y adhérer afin de donner de l'élan à ses activités et organiser des mini-tournois. Le club est aussi en train

d'envisager la possibilité d'organiser *La coupe du monde de football des Nations Unies* en 2017. Si le projet venait à se réaliser, la coupe aura lieu entre les différents sièges de l'ONU et se déroulera à Genève sur une période de 5 jours.

Afin que le club devienne une référence pour les autres clubs de football onusiens, n'hésitez pas à venir grossir ses rangs, que vous soyez amateurs ou plus encore, de grand épris de football. ■

Pour plus d'informations, veuillez prendre contact avec Ahmed DARWISH (adarwish@unog.ch) ou Lalouani CHOUDER (lalouani.chouder@unctad.org).

¹ www.agfc.ch

Jeux inter-agences 2016 à Malaga, Espagne

Les Nations Unies Genève reviennent auréolées de victoires

Organisés tous les ans depuis 1971, les Jeux inter-agences des Nations Unies rassemblent les organisations onusiennes basées à Genève, Rome, Vienne et Paris. Retour sur les Jeux de cette année, tenus à Malaga du 11 au 15 mai.



OLIVIER COMBE, COORDINATEUR DES PARTICIPANTS DE L'ONUG AUX IAG

La moisson de victoires des participants du bureau des Nations Unies à Genève fera date dans l'histoire des Jeux: cinq médailles d'or (basket-ball, beach-volley, natation, pétanque et tennis), deux médailles d'argent (golf et tennis de table) et deux médailles de bronze (athlétisme et échecs). Deux équipes finissent aux portes de la médaille avec une quatrième place dans des compétitions très relevées au badminton et au football.

Ces jeux étaient aux mains de l'Organisation mondiale du tourisme basée à Madrid, qui pour une première fois a su relever le défi de main de maître, avec en particulier une cérémonie d'ouverture émouvante. Toutes les délégations sportives ont défilé devant les supporters et les autorités locales dans une ambiance de type Jeux Olympiques. La ville de Malaga qui a hébergé les Jeux, sera la capitale européenne du sport en 2020 et a profité de nos Jeux pour «tester» grandeur nature sa préparation pour 2020, autant dire que les infrastructures étaient au niveau.

Cette année plus que jamais, de nouveaux participants sont venus grossir les rangs de l'ONUG et ils ont été emballés par les aspects sportif et de compétition mais aussi par le caractère rassembleur et unique de ces Jeux: «c'est la première fois que j'ai

l'impression de faire partie de la famille des Nations Unies et de ressentir l'idéal des Nations Unies partagé par les participants» confiait une des participantes. Les Jeux inter-agences servent avant tout à unir le personnel et construisent très concrètement le «One UN». ■



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Photos: © Jean-Philippe Escard



Fête des enfants au Palais des Nations Astérix et Obélix à l'honneur

La fête des enfants, organisée annuellement au Palais des Nations, s'est tenue le 11 mai 2016.

CONSEIL DE COORDINATION DU PERSONNEL DE L'UNUG

Malgré une pluie battante, la fête des enfants 2016 a eu lieu à l'UNOG le mercredi 11 mai. 300 enfants de fonctionnaires, âgés entre 4 et 10 ans sont venus à la rencontre d'Astérix, Obélix, César et Falbala qui étaient déguisés à la hauteur de l'évènement.

Les enfants, répartis dans des équipes de 6, ont participé à des jeux dans le Parc du Palais des Nations et pas n'importe quels jeux... Du lancer de menhir aux porteurs de César en passant par la ballade à dos de poney, tout le monde a pu trouver son compte. Le but des différents jeux était de collecter le plus de sesterces possible et les trois équipes gagnantes ont été décorées de couronnes d'argent, de bronze et d'or faites de feuilles de lauriers.

Et quoi de mieux après les jeux qu'un bon goûter offert à chaque enfant? Et ce n'est pas tout... Le clown Macaroni a ensuite entraîné les enfants dans un voyage burlesque qui a duré 45 minutes. Il n'était pas question de terminer la fête sans le bal des Gaulois qui a fait danser les enfants au rythme d'une musique endiablée.

Chaque enfant est parti le sourire aux lèvres mais aussi la fatigue sur le visage, avec la dernière BD de la collection d'Astérix et un sac de bonbons contenant de la poudre magique pour éveiller les papilles.

Que réservera la fête de 2017 à vos enfants? Probablement des surprises encore plus enchantées... Nous serons au rendez-vous et nous attendons vos enfants! ■



Message du rédacteur en chef

Vous aimeriez partager votre opinion sur le magazine et son contenu ?

N'hésitez plus et écrivez-nous !

Nous serions heureux de recevoir votre avis. Les plus pertinents, les plus intéressants, les plus originaux seront publiés dans le magazine.

Si vous souhaitez proposer un article, n'hésitez pas à me contacter à tout moment.

Et maintenant, à vos plumes !

Adressez vos commentaires à :

Alex Mejia, rédacteur en chef – UN Special
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Message from the editor-in-chief

Would you like to share your opinion about *UN Special* and its contents ?

Write to us!

We will be glad to hear from you. The most interesting, relevant, or even ingenious responses will be published in the magazine.

Should you wish to submit an article, please do not hesitate to contact me at any time.

Now, put pen to paper!

Send your thoughts to:

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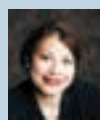
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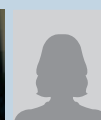
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