



## United Nations Report

There have been changes on our UN delegation! The new Main Rep is Shiuho Lin and I can assure you there will be more reports! The other members who hold EcoSoc passes are Joan Davis, Weishan Huang, Miguel Ibanez, and Jack Kupferman. The Department of Public Information (DPI) Main Rep is Lynna Scott Carnegie and alternate is Ruth Blackman. Susan Murany and I receive passes as Executive Director and Chair. Therefore, we have a potential of 9 individuals at the UN.

We have people participating in the following NGO Committees: Committee on Ageing, NY; Committee on the Status of Women; Committee on Migration; Committee on Human Rights; Indigenous People; Peace and Disarmament; and the UN Volunteer Committee.

Highlights since our Detroit Convention are:

- Jack has been appointed to be the Co-chair of the 2009 International Day of Older Persons to be held in October.
- Both Judy and Jack were invited to sit on ad hoc committees to investigate creating a Convention on Older Persons.
- Joan continues to be involved on the Planning Committee of the Department of Public Information (DPI) 3-day conference held every Fall. It will be held in Mexico City in September of 2009. She also sings in the UN Choir.
- Shiuho is actively involved in the NGO Migration Committee where she gave a presentation on February 19, 2009 as a Gray Panther. Her topic was How Climate Change was Affecting Migration.
- Weishan is still the treasurer for the NGO CSW, and she also sits on the Migration Committee.
- Judy was invited by DPI to co-chair a workshop on communications that was held Thursday, February 26, 2009. This is quite an achievement and she shared the job with Doris Schapira, League of Women Voters.
- Lynna attends the SCOW meetings and the UN Volunteers Committee.
- Miguel will be active in the Indigenous People meetings in May.
- Our newest member, Ruth Blackman, will attend the NGO Human Rights Committee meetings.
- Gray Panthers, in collaboration with other NGOs, presented a parallel event at the 53<sup>rd</sup> Commission on the Status of Women which was attended by over 70 people, overflowing the room capacity. The topic was The Impact of HIV/AIDS Caregiving on Girls and Older Women.
- Judy is the Co-chair of the Sub Committee on Older Women (SCOW).

At this time, a General Recommendation on Older Women for Convention to End all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) is in process. Ms. Ferdous Ara Begum, a CEDAW expert from Bangladesh, is the champion of the cause. Gray Panthers has been one of the prime movers in pushing for this. Because of this and other activities, collaborations with other NGOs have developed. One example of a potential relationship is with HelpAge, headquartered in London, which believes in older persons advocating for their own selves.

Elizabeth Sclater from the UK is our liaison and represents us in Geneva, Switzerland as does Michael Mernagh from Ireland. We also have a potential liaison from Uruguay in South America who would serve the same purpose.

As National Chair and a member of the UN team, I would recommend that all Gray Panthers members take the opportunity to visit the UN and attend a conference. It is a most interesting experience!

Sincerely,  
Judy Lear,  
National Board of Directors, Chair and UN Representative