

2021/22 Q2 NEWSLETTER

UNFCC Climate Change
Conference COP26 Glasgow
31 October –
13 November 2021

United Nations
Climate Change



Rotary
Representative
Network

THE DEAN'S LETTER

Judith Diment,
2021/22 Dean of the Rotary Representative Network

COP26 was the first time Rotary International had an official delegation which I was privileged to lead in my role as Dean of Rotary Representatives to the United Nations and International Agencies. The 31 Rotary Representatives represent Rotary at 22 UN and other agencies. COP conferences are organised by the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the host government.

Rotary has had Consultative status since the formation of the UN in 1947. COP26 was hosted by the UK Government and attended by 190+ country delegations and 1600 Intergovernmental- and Non-governmental organizations (IGOs and NGOs). The conference was organised in two areas: A Blue Zone and a Green Zone. The Blue Zone held the governments' plenary sessions and the Delegations' pavilions and individual government and NGO meetings and was open solely to registered delegates. The Green Zone was open to the public and included exhibitors from business and NGOs. Rotary's role was participatory in the events taking place in the Delegations' Pavilions in the Blue Zone. Partly because of Covid there was little opportunity for NGOs such as Rotary to engage in the main plenary discussions or influence them.



After 13 days of intense negotiations, COP26 concluded on Saturday 13th November 2021 with every Party at COP26 - representing almost 200 countries - agreeing to the Glasgow Climate Pact. This global agreement will accelerate action on climate this decade, and finally completes the Paris Rulebook. A record-breaking number of delegates gathered in Glasgow for this critical COP. Powerful progress has been made since the UK was designated the incoming Presidency. The aim of the UK COP26 Presidency was to keep alive the hope of limiting the rise in global temperature to 1.5C, and the Glasgow Climate Pact does just that. Combined with increased

ambition and action from countries, 1.5C remains in sight, but it will only be achieved if every country delivers on what they have pledged. Other pledges agreed including reducing methane emissions, phasing out coal, and stopping the destruction of forests and re-afforestation.



Because of the scale of the conference and the small size of the Rotary delegation, it was essential to have a clear focus based on existing relationships to achieve anything meaningful. My main focus was with the 54 countries of the Commonwealth, building on engagement over the last seven years with the Commonwealth Secretariat and High Commissioners, and maximizing the opportunity as President Shekhar Mehta is from India, the largest Commonwealth country. I had five priorities:

- High-level engagement of the Rotary International President with government Ministers and heads of NGOs – achieved by working with the Commonwealth Blue Charter team on the High-level Round Table on mangroves. The event was attended by the Secretary General of the Commonwealth and seven Environment Ministers or their Ambassadors, as well as experts from NGOs and academia. The outcome of this effort was agreement to set up mangrove projects in Bangladesh, India, Kenya, Maldives, Seychelles, Sri Lanka and Tanzania.

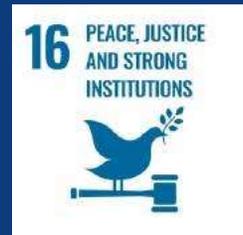
- Strengthening relations with delegates from UN and UN agencies including UNFCCC (Rotarian Paul Desanker), United Nations Environment Programme, and key governments, other international Agencies and NGOs – achieved by attending many side events and one-to-one meetings. Examples of this include Bangladeshi ministers and Rotarian Kazi Amdadul Hoque who attended the Round Table; Kenya President Kenyatta on preserving and restoring habitats; and Commonwealth meeting on mangrove restoration with Ministers from Australia, Sri Lanka and Fiji and Rotarian Steve Crooks.
- Creating opportunities for action by developing environment service projects with partners – achieved through the Round Table discussions and agreement to start mangrove projects in seven countries, as well as gender-based projects following several bilateral meetings with the President. Discussions focused on opportunities for collaboration with the Global Alliance of Universities on Climate (GUAC) and a number of Women’s Organisations.
- Giving young people a voice - achieved by working with Rotary Club of Helensburgh and Garelochside on a schools poster competition which received nearly 4000 entries. The posters were exhibited in 5 locations in Glasgow and the Commonwealth Pavilion at COP26 where I announced the winners. The posters remain displayed at Glasgow Airport for three months and a Rotary Day at Glasgow airport is being planned for local schools. The Lord Provost’s staff have requested to retain their display for an art exhibition on COP26 planned later this year. Plans are being considered to expand the competition.
- To give Rotary in Scotland a platform to create awareness – achieved by working with Rotary Club of Helensburgh and Garelochside who helped organise a reception at The Trades Hall attended by President Shekhar Mehta and Rashi Mehta, Glasgow civic dignitaries, Ministers and NGO representatives, and Scottish Rotarians.

I would sum up Rotary’s attendance at COP26 was putting Rotary on the global environment map. I received numerous comments from delegates how pleased they were to see Rotary participating and many requests to work with Rotary going forward. The importance of working together and involving civil society was mentioned in most meetings I attended. We can build on it for COP27 in Egypt by involving our Rotary Representatives to key agencies in Africa, including UNEP, African Union, African Development Bank, and UNICEF.



Judith Diment Dean of the Representative Network
Rotary Club of Maidenhead Thames

PROMOTING PEACE



Forced Displacement in Central America

The Organization of American States (OAS) and the Central American governments have a comprehensive regional protection and solutions framework, with the English acronym MIRPS, to address forced displacement in Central America. The scope of this agreement includes governments, civil society, international finance organizations, and businesses. OAS reached out to their Rotary Representative to see if Rotary districts and clubs could participate in terms of identifying and implementing successful projects aimed at job creation.

Rotary has a long history with the OAS including demonstration projects and many successful meetings and interchanges

Issue

Forced displacement is a major problem in Central America. In the Northern Triangle Countries of Central America – Guatemala, Honduras, and El Salvador – it is the major source of people leaving their country to join caravans moving to Mexico and the United States. The Central American crisis began in the late 1970s when major civil wars erupted in various countries causing it to become the world's most volatile region in terms of socioeconomic change. In Guatemala, the civil war lasted for 36 years from 1960 to 1996. The El Salvador civil war lasted for 12 years. More than two million people are estimated to have left El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras since 2014, many fleeing poverty, violence, and other hardships.

Approach

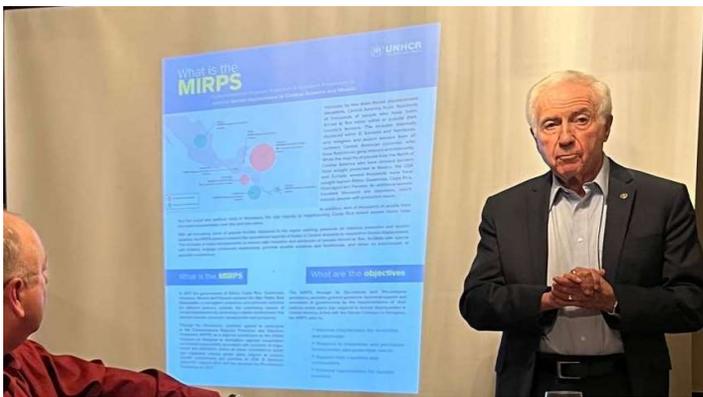
After the OAS contacted Rotary, it was decided an MOU would be an appropriate vehicle for engagement. All the Central America Districts 4240 (Panama, Costa Rica, Nicaragua, El Salvador) and 4250 (Guatemala, Belize, Honduras), and Districts 7610 and 7620 (Washington, DC) and the metro-Bethesda Rotary club are involved. The coordination for this, particularly with bi-lingual communications, took a great deal of time.

Selected Rotary Project

A successful Rotary-run Guatemala job training program was selected. Guatemala has the lowest level of access to secondary education in Latin America and one of the highest rates of unaccompanied migrant youth trying to reach the US illegally. The job training program is well established and has received funding from the Guatemala government. Currently, a Rotary Global Grant of \$130,000 has been awarded to train 500 students and create a fast-track education and employment mechanism. These Rotary-led job training programs have produced a job acceptance rate almost 90 percent.

Next Steps

A plan within the MIRPS framework will be developed to use this model and expand the project to other areas in Latin America. In addition, other Rotary projects will be evaluated for their applicability. The International Convention in Houston will be an opportunity for the various districts to interface with one another in person.



The OAS is a regional, multilateral organization which includes all 34 independent countries of the Western Hemisphere. The OAS also includes 72 Permanent Observer Countries. Its emphasis is on democracy, human rights, security, and development

Richard S. Carson

Rotary Representative to Organization of American States (OAS),
Rotary Club of Bethesda Chevy Chase

UNESCO'S 75TH ANNIVERSARY



On 12 November 2021, Cyril Noirtin participated to a special ceremony organized to celebrate UNESCO's 75th anniversary.

After two World Wars in less than thirty years, UNESCO was born of a clear vision: to achieve lasting peace, economic and political agreements among states are not enough. We need to bring people together through mutual understanding and dialogue between cultures.

Over the years, UNESCO has launched pioneering programs to achieve this. From the very beginning, UNESCO denounced racism, and mobilized philosophers, artists, the brightest minds from every nation, to develop innovative projects that changed how we see the world: The Universal Copyright Convention.... Biosphere Reserves.... World Heritage.... Intangible Heritage...



Some 26 heads of state and government and an impressive list of artists, singers, and musicians from around the world celebrated UNESCO's anniversary at this special ceremony. The proceedings were opened by UNESCO's Special Envoy for Peace and Reconciliation, Forest Whitaker.

Each world leader addressed the ceremony, and their speeches were interspersed by a series of artistic performances by international singers and musicians. At the close of the ceremony, the nearby Eiffel Tower was illuminated with the UNESCO logo.

Cyril Noirtin

Rotary Primary Representative to the UNESCO

Audrey Azoulay re-elected at the head of UNESCO

During the last UNESCO General Conference, Audrey Azoulay was re-elected by a very large majority for four years at the head of this UN organization, a second mandate that she wishes to focus particularly on education and environmental preservation. Director General Azoulay was one of the keynote speakers at the 2021 Rotary International Preconvention which took place virtually last June.



For her new mandate, she has set high goals with a "new social contract for education", "encouraging research on learning" and "promoting dialogue with the educational community", because "education increases awareness of the fragile beauty of nature." Audrey Azoulay also hoped for "a new contract for the planet", which will involve "doubling the size of the territories protected by UNESCO by 2030" to "protect 30% of the Earth's surface."

Cyril Noirtin

Rotary Primary Representative to the UNESCO

Rotary strengthens its relationship with UNESCO which celebrated this year its 75th anniversary

The relationship and cooperation between Rotary and UNESCO is longstanding and goes back to 1942 when Rotary organized the London Conference of Allied Ministers of Education, which led to the creation of UNESCO. Rotary International benefits from an official accreditation with UNESCO and since 2012, Rotary International has been accredited with UNESCO with the “Associate status” which is the highest level. This status was granted to Rotary for a renewable period of eight years.

The renewal process has been a major undertaking over the past year. Thanks to the combined work of the Rotary Representative team in Paris (Serge Gouteyron, Cyril Noirtin and Laura Bourgeois), the support received from the Rotary Secretariat in Evanston and the encouragement of Judith Diment, the Dean of the Representative Network, Rotary’s Associate was renewed by the UNESCO Executive Board until 2030.

This recognition is a tribute to the cooperation between Rotary and UNESCO in recent years. To mention just a few examples:

- Rotary Representatives to UNESCO have participated regularly as observers in sessions of the General Conference of UNESCO and in meetings of the Executive Board's Committee on Non-Governmental Partners. Rotary Representatives have also served and supported the work of the NGO-UNESCO liaison committee.
- Rotary has been involved in the preparation and follow-up of several International NGO Forums, coordinated by the NGO-UNESCO Liaison Committee, including the organization of the Sixth International NGO Forum on the theme "From Promotion to Peacebuilding with NGOs", Querétaro, Mexico, 3-4 November 2016.
- The strategic partnership between The Rotary Foundation and UNESCO-IHE Institute for Water Education aimed to tackle the world’s water and sanitation crisis by increasing the number of trained professionals to devise, plan, and implement solutions in developing and emerging countries.
- Almost every two or three years, Rotary organizes at the UNESCO Headquarter an International Conference called “Rotary Day UNESCO” with the participation of representatives and experts from the UNESCO secretariat and the President and senior officers of Rotary International.

There are also countless examples of actions carried out locally and regionally by Rotary clubs and districts in collaboration with UNESCO or its National Commissions, or in one of UNESCO's fields of action. For example, on the cultural level, an association of Rotary Clubs with a UNESCO World Heritage Site on their territory was formed in Albi in 2013.

And, more recently, a Rotary World Heritage Fellowship has been established by Italian Rotarians with its membership open to all Rotarians worldwide. Another example is the initiative of the Rotary inter-country committee France-United States of America, who organized in 2016 a forum on "diplomacy, peace and cultural heritage" with the participation of 16 American and French students with the patronage of UNESCO. Every year, since 2005, the French Rotary clubs, under the patronage of the French National commission of UNESCO, organized a competition to promote professional ethics.



Consistent with the Rotary Action Plan priorities, Rotary relations with UNESCO will continue to expand to include helping build connections for humanitarian projects, opening doors to expertise, and helping facilitate engagement at the local level. In the addition to the renewal of its “Associate status”, the activity of the relations between Rotary and UNESCO was marked this year by several important events:

In September 2021, Rotary International President-elect Jennifer Jones visited UNESCO and had a meeting with Jean-Yves Le Saux, UNESCO Director of the Bureau of Strategic Planning and Sabina Colombo, the Head Unit for Civil Society Partnerships.

RIPE Jennifer Jones, Rotary Representatives Cyril Noirtin and Serge Gouteyron, UNESCO secretariat representatives Sabina Colombo and Armin Ibrimovic standing in front of the Olive tree located in the middle of the square of tolerance in the gardens of the UNESCO headquarters in Paris.



RIPE Jennifer Jones, Rotary Representatives Cyril Noirtin and Sabina Colombo, the UNESCO Head Unit for Civil Society Partnerships standing on the top floor terrace of the UNESCO headquarters

In November 2021, I was invited to take the floor and address on behalf of Rotary the plenary session of the UNESCO General Conference which celebrated the 75th anniversary of the organization (The video of the intervention is available at the following address: <https://youtu.be/FcCAKgyBroQ>)

And more recently, Rotary actively participated in the Biennale of Luanda, entitled the “Pan-African Forum for the Culture of Peace.” Organized by the UNESCO and the African Union (AU) the event encouraged the prevention of violence and the resolution of conflicts, by encouraging cultural exchanges in Africa and dialogue between generations. Rotary participated in the partnership session on engaging youth as actors of social transformation for conflict prevention and sustainable development. Rotary also had a virtual booth available at <https://www.unesco.org/biennaleluanda/2021/en/rotary-international>.

In the incoming month, we will continue to look for way to consolidate and strengthen our relations in promoting new opportunities in the fields of education, environment, and culture of peace.

Cyril Noirtin

Rotary Primary Representative to the UNESCO

GENDER EQUALITY



Rotary Day with UNICEF: A Better World for Girls, A Prosperous World for All

On March 25-26, 2022, Rotary and UNICEF will come together to address empowering girls and creating a safe and more resilient world for them as we re-open societies post-Covid. Should in-person protocols allow, some 100 guests are expected to represent Rotary, UNICEF, and other external organizations.

The co-hosts for the event will be Shekhar Mehta, President of Rotary International and Catherine M. Russell, Executive Director of UNICEF. The program will include presentations and/or participation by Rotary People of Action, Youth Voices, Rotaractors and Rotary Action Groups. The two-hour program on Friday will be livestreamed. One-hour regional programs on Saturday will include Europe/Africa, Asia/India, and the Americas.

The program will address Education/Remote learning, WASH/Hygiene Education, Child Marriage, and Mental Health. Today, more girls can access and continue their primary education, incidence of child marriage is declining, national systems are improving health and education outcomes, and water and sanitation is increasingly available. However, progress has been hindered by the Covid-19 pandemic and are not yet nearly enough to meet the Sustainable Development Goals which aim to achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls by 2030.

Worldwide, one in four girls aged 15-18 are neither in school or education or employment or training, compared to one in 10 boys. And, one in five girls will be married while they are still children. We have a long way to go – and we want to learn from those who have had experience in empowering girls.

Rotary and UNICEF seek to inspire all participants with the importance of empowering girls. We can be catalysts for creating community-based solutions to empower girls, setting them up for healthy, hopeful, and thriving futures. During the event, the *Local Collaboration Framework*, a handbook designed to facilitate local level communication and collaboration for Rotary clubs and districts and UNICEF regional offices will be introduced.

Rose Cardarelli Ed. D

Rotary Representative to UNICEF, New York

Rotary Club Washington Global

FIGHTING DISEASE



2021 – the year that set the stage for a polio-free world

The following is from an article at: <https://polioeradication.org/news-post/2021-the-year-that-set-the-stage-for-a-polio-free-world/>, last accessed, 12/21/21

2021 may go down in history as the turning point in the global effort to eradicate polio.

With the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, continued wild polio transmission in the remaining endemic countries and spreading outbreaks of circulating vaccine-derived polioviruses type 2 (cVDPV2), this year began with many challenges facing polio eradication efforts. But amid this new reality, countries and partners of the Global Polio Eradication Initiative (GPEI) intensified their efforts to protect children from lifelong paralysis.

In June, the GPEI launched the new GPEI Strategy 2022-2026, which lays out the roadmap to achieving a lasting world free of all forms of polioviruses through stronger community engagement, a renewed focus on gender equity and the rollout of new tools and technologies. These new tools include the novel oral polio vaccine type 2 (nOPV2), which began deployment under Emergency Use Listing (EUL) as part of the GPEI's broader polio vaccine repository to curb cVDPV2 transmission. In August, the WHO African Region celebrated one year since it was certified wild polio-free, and countries recommitted to strong cVDPV2 outbreak response across the continent with the support of the GPEI.

Further critical progress took place in Afghanistan – one of two final countries endemic for wild poliovirus, along with Pakistan. For the first time in more than three years, nationwide polio immunization campaigns resumed across Afghanistan reaching 8.5 million children, including 2.4 million children who were previously inaccessible.

At the same time, polio programme health workers at the forefront continued to support global COVID-19 response efforts by delivering vaccines, mobilizing communities, and countering misinformation among other activities. The use of GPEI infrastructure for health emergency response has provided critical lessons for integrating polio resources into broader health systems as more countries work towards transition and the post-certification period.

Following dire predictions issued at the end of 2020, the polio programme once again proved its ability to adapt to programmatic, epidemiological and political developments. Entering 2022, there is much cause for cautious optimism – wild poliovirus transmission has slowed drastically, and cases of cVDPV2 have also declined compared to last year.

Importantly, commitment to achieving a lasting polio-free world is evident at all levels: by core GPEI partners, including among the Polio Oversight Board, which travelled to Pakistan twice in 2021; by health workers, communities and parents; and by country leaders worldwide who helped champion this year's milestones. With the new strategy, new tools and adapted approaches, the stage is set to achieve lasting success.

To stop all forms of polio for good, the GPEI aims to capitalize on the positive epidemiological situation leading into 2022. A key opportunity to kick-start the year will be the WHO Executive Board meeting in January, where Member States plan to discuss building on the successes of this past year by fully implementing and financing the programme's new strategy. Rotary and other key global GPEI partners are planning a renewed and intensified outreach across the broader international development community to secure the necessary financial resources to achieve success. Polio immunization campaigns will also continue in full force in both endemic and outbreak countries.



Twelve months ago, the programme was in a much different place, as WHO and UNICEF launched an Emergency Call to Action to draw attention to the need for renewed commitment. A year later, thanks to a strengthened and unified response, the GPEI is meeting the moment and is more committed than ever to end all forms of poliovirus, once and for all.

UPCOMING ACTIVITY

Judith Diment, Dean of the Representative Network, to attend 150th WHO Executive Board meeting

Judith Diment, Dean of the Rotary Representatives will attend the 150th WHO Executive Board meeting (EB148) on 24-29 January 2022.

Rotary Day with UNICEF: A Better World for Girls, A Prosperous World for All

Join us on March 25-26, 2022, for Rotary Day with UNICEF. More information will follow.

International Women's Day, 8 March 2022

Several Representatives will be involved with meetings on International Women's Day. The theme is "Gender equality today for a sustainable tomorrow" recognizing the contribution of women and girls around the world, who are leading the charge on climate change adaptation, mitigation, and response to build a more sustainable future for all. See <http://unwmo.men/6TQh5OH8Obq>

Rotary International Convention Houston 12-16 June 2022

Rotary Representative Rich Carson will coordinate a breakout session on the OAS-MIRPS project. In addition, there will be a breakout session highlighting Rotary People of Action.

CONNECTING THE WORLD

30 Representatives to 23 organizations in 14 cities

Washington, D.C.



New York



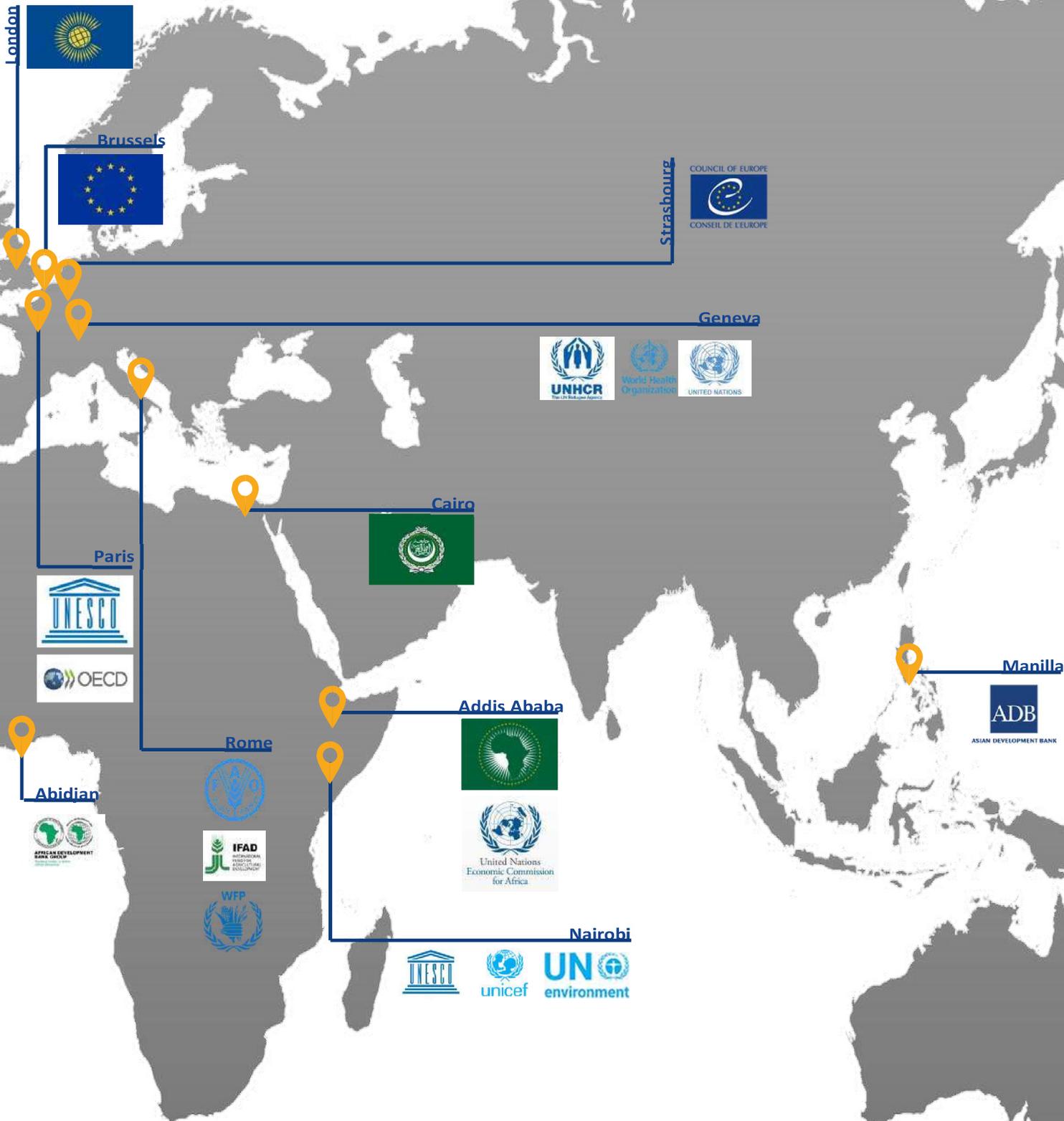
The Rotary Representative Network started this work in the 1940s, with Rotarians having played multiple leadership roles at the [1945 San Francisco conference which led to the United Nations](#).

Building upon its deep and lasting relationship with the United Nations, the Rotary Representative Network today is comprised of 30 Representatives to 23 UN offices, specialized agencies and key International organizations in 14 cities around the world.

Rotary International President Shekhar Mehta has called on this group to open opportunities across the world for talented, thoughtful, and generous people to unite and take meaningful action through Rotary service.

Santiago





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