

UNITED NATIONS ASSOCIATION

--WESTMINSTER--

Twinned with UNA Connecticut For World Peace, Disarmament, Development and Human Rights



PUBLIC MEETING

Whatever happened to the UN Conference on Racism?

**Twelve steps the UK can take now
to move from STOP to Fast Forward!**

The Thatcher Room, Portcullis House

(Bridge Street, opposite Big Ben)

Wednesday, 12 December, 7.00 pm

arrive early to clear security

(in the name of Tony Colman MP, Chair, UN Parliamentary group)

The United Nations World Conference Against Racism (WCAR) held in Durban in September is now remembered principally for becoming mired in two important issues; the legacy of slavery and consequent claims for reparations and apologies by certain States, and the Palestine/Israeli stand-off. The in-out policy of the United States, leading to its eventual walk-out disappointed many who saw this to be an arrogant disregard of its duties as a leading global citizen. However, as much as the tragic events of September 11 have concentrated our minds towards real priorities, the bitterness created at the Racism conference remains deeply felt and little progress has been made. European and African governments are still arguing about the relative importance of several issues. Here in the UK, the Home Office and the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, which both hosted NGO teams in Durban, appear to be going slow on WCAR, claiming the implementation of anti-terrorism measures to be more urgent. Governments are showing poor leadership and NGOs worldwide feel powerless to implement key programmes.

The principal outcome of WCAR will be agreement by governments on the Durban Declaration and the Programme of Action. Due to the arguments referred to above, these documents are not yet in the public domain but Westminster UNA has viewed them and reduced their seventy pages to a 12-point Action Plan, to be launched at the meeting on 12 December. For the first time in the UK, there will be the opportunity for rational analysis and discussion on the principal issues addressed in Durban; all of them! If our governments cannot move forward, then surely we should try. Join us together with experts working in the key fields where action can bring about change.

For more information, contact David Wardrop, Chairman, Westminster UNA

61 Sedlescombe Road, London SW6 1RE Tel 0207 385 6738

e-mail davidwardrop@lineone.net