

NEWS – December 19, 2008

Dear Friends and Colleagues,

The Vienna Colloquium on *Innovative UN Teaching Techniques* produced an impressive list of tools and techniques. Emphasizing the major challenge to encourage global citizenship through education as well as to promote intercultural dialogue, it was deplored, however, that the UN is (still) not viewed as a leading actor in global affairs. We sense that building a global community of experts around a joint concept of UN Studies is a more timely issue than ever. Thanks to your active engagement and support, our informal working group has been progressing throughout 2008, which is reflected in an ever-more growing list of activities and intensified debates, either virtual or in person.

Please take a look at what has happened in November and December, and at our planned activities for 2009 – all of which would not be possible without your enthusiasm and willingness to contribute:

Past Events

Second and third UNSA Dialogue on UN Studies concept. In our second dialogue on November 6, participants focused on the distinction between a UN Studies concept and the concept of global governance. Our third dialogue on December 4 started off with a report on the Vienna Colloquium (see below), before we explored ways how to better integrate regional and other views in our work. For a detailed summary of this last meeting, please [click here](#).

Colloquium on Innovative UN Teaching Techniques in Vienna, Diplomatic Academy. Over 60 academics and practitioners from Europe, the US and Canada attended this **colloquium**, which took place at the Diplomatic Academy in Vienna on November 22, supported by ACUNS, the Diplomatic Academy, and the Austrian Science and Research Liaison Office Ljubljana. The colloquium provided very useful insights into who is doing what in the field of teaching on the UN system in Central, East and Southeast Europe. [A detailed report is available on our wiki portal](#).

UNSA Meeting in Vienna, Juridicum. 15 participants - representing ACUNS, different faculties of the University of Vienna, the UN Office on Drugs and Crime, the University of Montenegro, the European University in Skopje, and the Austrian Science and Research Liaison Office Ljubljana - met at the Juridicum (Law School Building) in Vienna on Sunday, November 23, for an informal discussion about UNSA's collaborative effort to develop a joint concept of UN Studies: What defines UN Studies, and why do we need such a field of study?

[Click here for a detailed report](#).

Ongoing and Future Activities

Among the possible roads for action that we discussed in this meeting, it was agreed to:

- **Organize a summer school for the ne(x)t generation**, offering training for students, teachers and practitioners in using new media such as wikis (Vienna, possibly in early July).
- **Organize a UNSA meeting prior to the [ACUNS 2009 annual meeting in Trinidad and Tobago](#)** to connect with partners from the Caribbean with an interest in UN Studies.
- **Continue our [UNSA Dialogues](#)**, with a renewed focus on the main pillars of our UN Studies concept, starting with a discussion on how to build bridges between academics and practitioners (see Dialogue #4 below).
- **Intensify our online discussion via our [informal discussion papers](#) and our [wiki portal at www.unstudies.org](#)** to further advance our joint work on UN Studies concept, including theory-building, with the opportunity to publish results in the [Journal on International Organization Studies](#).

Next UNSA Dialogue. As aforementioned, the next dialogue is scheduled to take place on **Thursday, January 8**, at 6pm CET / noon EST. We will launch our debate about how to best build “magical bridges” between academics and practitioners, also taking into account the various planned events that we deem highly useful in this effort. We will circulate an email reminder in early January 2009 including a link to the meeting agenda and possible discussion topics.

As fuel for thought, please take a look at our [Mission Statement](#) and the [UNSA Discussion Paper #1](#) (“Foundations for an Emerging Field of Study”). This paper is part of a series of informal papers offering new ideas that will help us explore new directions in UN research and teaching and develop a concept of UN Studies.

We look forward to hearing your comments and thoughts.

Happy Holidays and Happy New Year,

Henrike and Julia

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