

# UN-aligned perspectives

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Free of Charge



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# UN-ALIGNED LAUNCHED SUCCESSFULLY!

*By Ariana Yekrangi*

Last Friday's successful launch marks a new milestone in world politics, getting us ever closer to a world that works for and belongs to everyone. What makes this event so important is that UN-aligned doesn't aim to make changes within our broken political systems, but aims to change the global framework itself as its primary goal.

**UN-aligned is about peace, prosperity and stability**

UN-aligned is an organisation that aims to create long lasting peace, prosperity and stability among its member states, which is not based on the self-indulgent interests of superpowers and their wealth. Instead, the plan is to make our economies, politics and people so closely interconnected that nationalistic secessionist sentiments would become both impractical and unthinkable.

At a later stage, when a national branch has enough members and resources to take the leap from the virtual to the real world, this will happen with the support of the whole organisation.

Should two or more national parties be elected in government, these may join into a federal partnership for the duration of their mandate in accordance with the UN-aligned's manifesto.

### **Conclusion:**

In the past two months alone, we received the generous support of members from more than 12 countries around the globe, many of whom offered their strong and continuing support for UN-aligned.

## **Adopting a cause...**

All articles in UN-aligned's manifesto are important, but it is only natural that we will feel more attached to some rather than to others. If you are particularly passionate about one of the articles in the manifesto, **we would like you to consider becoming a voluntary UN-aligned Ambassador for that specific article.**

The task will involve taking the standard and campaigning for that particular issue, with the full force of the organisation behind you. You will be given guidance on how best to carry out this mission, as well as ongoing support. If you are interested, please send us a letter of intent. You will only need to identify your chosen article and explain why you have chosen it and how you mean to promote it. There is no closing date, and the position will be given to the first suitable applicant.

One observer wrote:

“As an individual passionate about human rights, I’ve found myself having the same thoughts that has led to the creation of UN-aligned. Very happy to know something is being done, and eager to see where this organisation is going.”

Unity is force and this is hardly a secret. The United States of America, The European Union and China have known this since their foundation. In a world of shifting superpowers, we hardly stand a chance if we decide to be alone. Nationalistic sentiments are no longer justified or sufficient as the carnage of the last century suggests that they produce few, if any, lasting winners.







# UN-ALIGNED AND ITS FEDERAL OUTLOOK

*By Adriano Liberto*

## **Federation is not a dirty word**

For many people, federalism is a nasty word. They associated it with assimilation; the blending of cultures into a vague clinical conglomeration. Nevertheless, whilst the worst kind of federalism may indeed look like a Borg collective, that is far from the kind of federalism UN-aligned advocates.

Many nations are federations, each with their own history and motivations. Their constituent parts are often called states, but they may have other names too, such as cantons, emirates and oblasts.

## **A federation can actually bolster cultural identities**

The European Union is not a federation (yet), but perhaps it is the closest to UN-aligned's vision of a federated world: one where particular cultures are respected and encouraged.



In fact, UN-aligned is even more radical than that, since it envisions more autonomy for distinct cultural entities. So, while global issues would come under the jurisdiction of the central government, local ones would not. Indeed, many local authorities around the world already exercise a high level of autonomy, however, this is not always the case.

## **federation can also crush them...**

As Ken Saro-Wiwa, the champion of the Ogoni cause for autonomy stated in his diary:

“In virtually every nation state there are several ‘Ogonis’ – despairing and disappearing people suffering the yoke of political marginalisation, economic strangulation and environmental degradation, or a combination of these, unable to lift a finger to save themselves. What is their future?”

The Unrepresented Nations and Peoples Organization (UNPO) represents such people. It is made up of communities who feel marginalised and disempowered.



Currently, the organisation has 44 members, including the Government of Somaliland, the Central Tibetan Administration, the Free Papua Movement of West Papua, the Assemblea Nacional Catalana and the Taiwan Foundation for Democracy. Not all its members are as well known and for the next few months, this section will feature a range of these members. The first of these features will be on the Ogoni.



## The Ogoni fight for survival

Ogoniland consists of an area of just over 1,000 km<sup>2</sup> with a population of around two million people. It is situated in Nigeria's Rivers State in the Niger Delta region on the Gulf of Guinea. Before British colonial rule of Nigeria in 1885, the Ogoni had always been distinct and they had never been colonised by others in the region. The British chose to divide the area into manageable sections, taking into account only the larger ethnic groups, despite Ogoni resistance. The situation deteriorated rapidly for the Ogoni when oil extraction began in 1956.

After Nigeria became an independent federation in 1960, the situation continued to worsen. Drilling resulted in thousands of oil-spills that devastated much of the Niger Delta region, including the Ogoni homeland. A once thriving community was pushed to the brink of starvation as both land and waters were being contaminated. Despite the wealth that the industry produced, the locals were left to languish.

### The Ogoni Bill of Rights

In October 1990 representatives of the Ogoni presented The Ogoni Bill of Rights to the Nigerian government in the hope of gaining limited autonomy. The Bill highlighted the injustices inflicted on the Ogoni. The Nigerian government, however, in collaboration with Royal Dutch/Shell, were in no mood to compromise. Resistance led to further suppression and brutality by the authorities and in 1993 Ogoni villages were stormed and thousands were killed, while tens of thousands were displaced.

### Ken Saro-Wiwa

A tireless champion of the Ogoni was one of their own, Ken Saro-Wiwa, an environmental activist. He was also a talented author and well-known television producer. He dedicated much of his life to the Ogoni cause.



Saro-Wiwa and the Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People (MOSOP) were equally committed to their cause as they were to non-violence. This, however, just made it easier for the military dictatorship of Sani Abacha to try to silence them through brutal repression. Yet, as Saro-Wiwa stated in one of his poems: "Silence would be treason." He knew what he was up against from the beginning. After his final arrest, he wrote in a letter to his Irish friend and ally, Sister Majella McCarron:

"I'm not worried for myself. When I undertook to confront Shell & the Nigerian establishment, I signed my death warrant, so to speak. At 52, I think I've lived a charmed life. A few more books, maybe, and the opportunity to assist others would have been welcome. But it's okay."

**Suppression will not silence them**

What Saro-Wiwa did worry about was the welfare of his people. Nevertheless, he believed in their resilience and his letters to sister Majella often highlight their courage and that of the Ogoni women in particular. He had no doubt that justice would triumph in the end. Saro-wiwa was arrested in May 1994 on trumped-up charges and sentenced in a rigged trial with eight other activists (Saturday Dobee, Nordu Eawo, Daniel Gbooko, Paul Levera, Felix Nuate, Baribor Bera, Barinem Kiobel, and John Kpuine). They were hanged in November 1995 and became renowned as the Ogoni Nine. After the execution, in a rare display of principle, the Commonwealth of Nations stripped Nigeria of its membership.

**Limited gains**

In June 2009, though still denying any responsibility, Shell agreed to pay \$15.5 million to the families of the Ogoni Nine. They settled out of court to avoid a trial that had been initiated by one of Ken Saro-Wiwa's sons in the US.

As for the Nigerian government, it has never apologised for the brutal repression, devastation or executions. Nevertheless, it has taken on board recommendations made in a 2011 Report by the United Nations Environment Programme for the decontamination and rehabilitation of the area. The cost of clean-up operation was estimated at about \$1 billion and it would take approximately thirty years.

The struggle for autonomy and the survival of the Ogoni culture, however, continues thanks to the passion of all Ogoni activists.

We can celebrate them with Fire, a poem by  
Saro-Wiwa:

There is a fire in me  
Burns all night and day  
Flares at injustice  
Leaps at oppression  
Glow warmly in beauty.



# TAKE THIS SHORT QUIZ

## ENTERTAINMENT

A COPY TO THE ANSWERS OF THIS QUIZ ARE  
AVAILABLE AT THE END OF THE MAGAZINE.

*For suggestions and feedback please write to us at [contact@un-aligned.org](mailto:contact@un-aligned.org)*

### 01 Who said it:

- "I know not with what weapons World War III will be fought, but World War IV will be fought with sticks and stones."
- "Great minds discuss ideas; average minds discuss events; small minds discuss people."
- "The United States is also a one-party state but, with typical American extravagance, they have two of them."

### 02 In what country would you find these ancient sites:

- Axum
- Persepolis
- Angkor Wat

### 03 The following people are buried in Isola San Michele, Venice; what was their main profession?

- Sergei Diaghilev
- Igor Stravinsky
- Frederick Rolfe

### 04 Who painted these famous artworks:

- The Guernica
- Diego and I
- The Great Wave of Kanagawa

### 05 In 2002 the Belgian government formally apologised for its role in the assassination of Patrice Lumumba; who was he?

### 06 Where would you find these famous mountains:

- Mount Ararat (considered by some as the landing site of Noah's Ark)
- Mount Everest
- Mount Kilimanjaro

### 07 What species is being threatened by colony collapse disorder?

### 08 What countries make up the five permanent members of the UN Security Council?

### 09 Who directed the following films:

- The Shining
- The Seventh Seal
- Ivan's Childhood

## Join UN-aligned

The world is changing rapidly; and so will our perception and fabric of life. Idealism is often used as a term of contempt, but creative people understand the power of imagination. **We need to visualise and formulate a better world in order to make it a reality.** This is the essence of UN-aligned.

UN-aligned was created with the goal of uniting our globe by a federal world order, which is based on the core principles of a shared humanity and a shared planet. It was this aim that united Adriano Liberto and Ariana Yekrangi to create this beacon of change.

Join our global movement today and be the change you want to see. Our membership is completely free of charge.

As a member you can:

- Organise and manage a cell or parish
- Enjoy complete & free access to our premium benefits including: language courses, our virtual library and so much more
- Contribute to our newsletter
- Be part of a like-minded community

Visit [www.un-aligned.org/register](http://www.un-aligned.org/register) for more information





## Quiz Answer Sheet

a) Albert Einstein b) Eleanor Roosevelt c) Julius Nyerere

a) Ethiopia b) Iran c) Cambodia

a) Impresario (famous for creating the Ballets Russes) b) Composer (The Rite of Spring, Petrushka...) c) Writer (Hadrian VII)

a) Picasso b) Frida Kahlo c) Katsushika Hokusai

He was the first Prime Minister of the D. R. of Congo (then called the republic of Congo).

a) Turkey b) Nepal and China (Tibet Autonomous Region) c) Tanzania

Bees.

China, France, the United Kingdom, the Russian Federation and the United States.

a) Stanley Kubrick b) Ingmar Bergman c) Andrei Tarkovsky

## Credits

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