



**United Nations Association in Canada**  
**Association canadienne pour les Nations Unies**

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**UNA-Canada Leadership Transition:  
Long-serving President & CEO, Kate White, steps down**

2020 December 31: Kathryn White has announced that she is moving on after serving for seventeen years as President and CEO of the United Nations Association of Canada (UNA-Canada).. She will remain as Vice President of the World Federation of United Nations Associations (WFUNA), having served previously as the elected Chair of the WFUNA Board.

"Leading this Association has been a privilege. It has been enormously rewarding, both professionally and personally. I have had the pleasure to meet, build friendships and work with some of the leading thinkers, actors and committed global citizens across Canada and around the world. I have been able to achieve solutions on some of the most significant challenges and opportunities for development, both at home and internationally. It has been exciting to work with a talented team of both emerging and seasoned professionals and volunteers. I am proud of the foundation, built and strengthened, which leaves UNA-Canada well-positioned for its next 75 years. Especially in this year of COVID, UNA-Canada and its team have continued to achieve its mandate – *to grow global citizens*. Our work has provided transformative opportunities to tens of thousands of young lives through our programmes; scores of careers have been launched for staff and those we serve; and national as well as global policy has been shaped towards a more fair, just world," said White.

The Board of Directors, under the leadership of former Canadian Permanent Representative to the UN, Guillermo Rishchynski, has established a Transition Committee, with VP Vittoria Varalli and Past Chair Michael Klosevych, to identify Ms. White's successor. Sarah Kambites, Senior Director of Programmes and Innovation with UNA-Canada, has been appointed as Acting President & CEO. (For more information please watch our [website](#) or contact [info@unac.org](mailto:info@unac.org))

"On behalf of the Board and our members across the country, I would like to thank Kate for her outstanding leadership and her commitment to UNA-Canada's growth and success. The Association's reach and impact has grown exponentially under her watch, and she has built an entrepreneurial spirit to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). I had the pleasure of working with Kate during my term as Canada's ambassador to the United Nations and experienced her knowledge of the international system, care for Canada's place in the world, and pragmatism as she worked for an effective global table." says Guillermo Rishchynski, Chair of UNA-Canada's Board of Directors.

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*Growing Global Citizens § Citoyens du monde à venir*

UNA-Canada notable initiatives under Kate White's leadership include:

*Canada Green Corps* (and Green Spaces): provided 1000+ un and underemployed youth with work integrated learning opportunities to ignite and accelerate the green economy across Canada - an initiative that is continuing to make a difference.

*Building Young Entrepreneurs*: skills training for sustainable employment for multibarriered youth - the latest and largest national initiative in a series of innovative human rights/diversity/anti-racism initiatives which she brought to UNA-Canada over her tenure.

*The New Diplomacy of Natural Resources*: she brought senior scholars and sector-specific emergent leaders together to develop negotiation skills geared towards mutual resolutions on natural resource development issues, key to Canada's future prosperity and climate action. The programme now passes 15 iterations.

*Healthy Children, Health Communities*: Kate initiated the first multi-stakeholder qualitative and quantitative research (including engagement of youth in middle-childhood) for exploration in Canada of the impacts of the Social Determinants of Health.

Kate's thinking and efforts on foreign policy research and development have placed UNA-Canada on the forefront of innovative financing for development and the role of the private sector: youth as peacebuilders; gender and diversity; and climate action. "I am certain the deeply valued friendships and knowledge developed through my time with UNA-Canada will contribute greatly to my coming endeavours," said White.

Prior to leading UNA-Canada:

White headed a social and foreign policy consultancy, developing and implementing: ground-breaking research on the role of protest; a national programme, *Risk & Society*, that engaged citizens and communities to identify, prepare, mitigate, respond to, recover from crisis - notably climate; trained senior military leaders on risk communication in crisis; conducted research on various peace processes - including in Cyprus, which led to the development by civil society of the Annan Accord; advocated for gender inclusion; climate action; private sector ESG.

Early in her career, Kate was a journalist and news manager with The Canadian Review, the Globe & Mail, the New Scientist and others.

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The United Nations Association in Canada is an historic charity that is marking 75 years in 2020 of 'growing global citizens' in Canada. It is a membership organization with twenty volunteer Branches and contacts and 30 000 members from coast to coast to coast. A founding member of the World Federation of the United Nations Associations, UNA-Canada brings a global civil society focus to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals and remains the leading Canadian UN policy voice. [Please consider becoming a member.](#)